NATION

ISRO to kick off 2026 launches with Earth Observation Satellite

≫ Page: 4 ≪

BUSINESS

Bernstein revises India's equity outlook to 'Neutral'

≫ Page: 7 ≪

SPORTS

Kohli, Rohit in focus as India eye winning start against NZ

≫ Page: 8 ≪

www.twitter.com/EnglishSalar
www.facebook.com/EnglishSalar
www.instagram.com/dailysalarenglish
youtube.com/@dailysalardigital

SALAR

DIGITAL ENGLISH DAILY, BENGALURU

سالار روزنامہ بنگلور

Website: salarnews.in | www.magzter.com | 11 JANUARY 2026 | SUNDAY | BENGALURU | 21 RAJAB, 1447 H | Vol 5 | Issue No 9 | Pages: 8

Minimum temperatures have dipped to 3 to 6 degrees Celsius below normal at a few places across interior Karnataka **PHOTO: PTI**

North K'taka braces for cold wave

BENGALURU, 10 JAN

- Bengaluru recorded a minimum temperature of 14°C after witnessing light showers on Saturday.

Cold wave conditions are likely to prevail over parts of north interior Karnataka during the next 24 hours, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said on Saturday. Minimum temperatures have dipped significantly, remaining three to six degrees Celsius below normal at a few places across interior Karnataka. Fog was also reported at isolated locations.

Bengaluru recorded a minimum temperature of 14°C after witnessing light showers on Saturday. Vijayapura experienced cold wave conditions during the past 24 hours, according to the IMD's weather bulletin.

Meanwhile, a depression over the southwest Bay of Bengal, located off the northeast Sri Lanka coast on Saturday morning, is moving west-north-westwards. The IMD said the system moved at a speed of around 15 kmph over the past six hours and was centred at 8.30 am. It is very likely to continue in the same direction and cross the north Sri Lanka coast between Trincomalee and Jaffna, close to Mullaittivu, by the afternoon.

However, it is unlikely to have any direct impact on Karnataka's rainfall pattern.

The IMD has forecast largely dry weather across most parts of Karnataka over the coming days.

Light rain is likely at one or two places in Tumakuru, Chikkaballapura, Kolar, Bengaluru Rural and Urban, Ramanagara, Mandya, Mysuru, Chamarajanagara and Kodagu districts. Dry weather is expected to prevail over Ballari, Chikkamagaluru, Chitradurga, Davanagere, Hassan, Shivamogga and Vijayanagara. *—PTI*

Case filed after II PUC prep paper leaked in K'buragi

KALABURAGI, 10 JAN

A case has been registered at the Station Bazaar Police Station in Kalaburagi following allegations of leakage of the English question paper for the II PUC preparatory examination held on 8 January. The exam, scheduled from 10 am to 1 pm, was reportedly compromised when the question paper was circulated on social media even before it began, raising serious concerns.

Deputy Director of Pre-University Education (DDPI) Suresh Akkanna lodged a complaint with the police, urging strict action against those responsible. Acting on the complaint, Station Bazaar police registered an FIR. ***—Salar News***

Owaisi says hijab wearing woman could be a PM

MUMBAI, 10 JAN

AIMIM chief Asaduddin Owaisi on Thursday said India would one day have a hijab-clad woman as Prime Minister, asserting that the Constitution guarantees equal rights to citizens of all communities. Addressing an election rally in Maharashtra on 9 January ahead of civic polls, Owaisi said the Constitution framed by Dr B R Ambedkar allows any citizen to become Prime Minister, Chief Minister or mayor, unlike Pakistan where only members of one religion can hold top constitutional posts. Targeting the ruling party, he said the "hate being spread against Muslims will not last long". The BJP strongly criticised the remark, calling it "irresponsible".***—PTI***

UPSC candidates to undergo face authentication

NEW DELHI, 10 JAN

The Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) announced that all candidates appearing for its recruitment examinations will undergo face authentication at exam centres to strengthen the integrity of the process. The move follows a successful pilot of AI-enabled facial recognition during the NDA and NA II, 2025, and CDS II, 2025 exams, conducted at select centres in Gurugram. Candidates' faces were digitally matched with registration photographs, reducing verification time to just 8–10 seconds per candidate, according to UPSC chairman Ajay Kumar. UPSC conducts exams for government posts, including the civil services for the IAS, IFS and IPS, among others. The new system is expected to streamline entry.***—PTI***

'PAK CHANGING ITS CONSTITUTION SHOWS OP SINDOOR FAILURE'

PUNE, 10 JAN

Operation Sindoor forced Pakistan to undertake constitutional amendments, which is an acknowledgement that things did not go well for it, Chief of Defence Staff General Anil Chauhan said.

The CDS said Operation Sindoor is on pause now. The amendment to Article 243 of the Constitution of Pakistan has introduced significant changes in that country's higher defence organisation.

"If I were to summarise, the first is the abolition of the post of Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee, a position that was created to promote unity among the three services. That post has now been abolished. In its place, they created the post of Chief of Defence Forces (CDF)," he said. *— PTI*

US GOVT READY TO SELL VENEZUELAN OIL TO INDIA

This comes after Reliance seeks US' permit to buy the oil

NEW DELHI/ WASHINGTON, 10 JAN

US had claimed that a proposed India–US trade deal was stalled because PM Narendra Modi did not call US President Donald Trump **PHOTO: PTI**

The White House has indicated it is prepared to allow India to purchase Venezuelan oil under a new US-controlled framework, raising the possibility of partially reopening trade frozen by American sanctions.

A senior Trump administration official told IANS that India could resume buying Venezuelan crude, though finer details are still being worked out. US Energy Secretary Christopher Wright said the oil would flow under a tightly regulated structure, with payments routed through US-monitored accounts. Before sanctions, India was one of Venezuela's largest customers, importing heavy crude for its refineries.

Reliance Industries Ltd, operator of the world's largest refining complex in Gujarat, is reportedly in talks with the US State and Treasury departments seeking authorisation to resume Venezuelan oil imports if permitted for non US buyers.

Meanwhile, India has been invited to a meeting of finance ministers from the Group of Seven (G7) advanced economies in Washington, US Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent said. The discussion will focus on critical minerals, though it is not yet clear whether India has accepted the invitation.

Adding to diplomatic momentum, US ambassador-designate Sergio Gor arrived in New Delhi on Friday. Sworn in mid-November, Gor, 38, is a key Trump aide tasked with strengthening bilateral ties, which have faced tensions over tariffs, trade, and energy policies. "Great to be back in India! Incredible opportunities ahead for our two nations!" Gor said on social media.

This comes as India–US trade talks hit a major roadblock following the Trump administration's imposition of a steep 50 per cent tariff on Indian imports, including a 25 per cent duty linked to Russian oil. US Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick claimed that a proposed India–US trade deal stalled because Prime Minister Narendra Modi did not call President Trump. New Delhi strongly rejected the charge as "inaccurate," stating that Modi and Trump spoke at least eight times in 2025. *—PTI*

Telangana issues 'stop use' notice for Almont-Kid Syrup

HYDERABAD, 10 JAN

Based on an alert from the Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO), Telangana issued an urgent advisory to immediately stop the use of Almont-Kid Syrup- commonly prescribed to treat allergies, hay fever, and asthma in children. The Telangana Drugs Control Administration (DCA) said on Saturday that Ethylene Glycol, a highly toxic substance, was found by the CDSCO in the syrup medicine.

The alert was issued by the CDSCO's East Zone office in Kolkata, citing a laboratory report that declared Levocetirizine Dihydrochloride and Montelukast Sodium Syrup adulterated. According to the advisory, the syrup bearing Batch No. AL-24002 was manufactured by Tridus Remedies in Bihar.

The Telanagana DCA advised the public to immediately stop using the syrup if in possession and report it to the nearest DCA without delay. It also directed all Drug Inspectors and Assistant Directors across the state to alert retailers, wholesalers, distributors and hospitals to freeze available stocks of the batch and ensure it is neither dispensed nor sold under any circumstances.

The public may also report possession of the said product directly to the Drugs Control Administration, Telangana, through the Toll-Free Number, it added.

The Telangana DCA has initiated enforcement action and is monitoring the situation to prevent public health risks.

The public is urged to exercise utmost caution and refrain from using the aforementioned product to avert any potential health hazards associated with Ethylene Glycol toxicity, the DCA further said *—PTI*

MP govt invests Rs 3.5 cr in cow products curing cancer

JABALPUR, 10 JAN

A Madhya Pradesh government-funded project researching cow dung, urine, and dairy products (Panchagavya) as a potential cancer cure has come under investigation for alleged misuse of funds. Between 2011 and 2018, nearly Rs 1.92 crore of the Rs 3.5 crore sanctioned was reportedly spent on items far exceeding market rates, including cow dung, cow urine, pots, raw materials, and machinery, which should have cost just Rs 15–20 lakh.

The probe also flagged officials used the Rs 3.5 crore on air travel to Goa and Bengaluru, the purchase of a Rs 7.5 lakh car, fuel and maintenance of Rs 7.5 lakh, Rs 3.5 lakh on labour, and Rs 15 lakh on tables and electronics, none of which were part of the original plan. Despite over a decade of research, no cure for cancer or other serious diseases has been developed, and farmer training under the project remains unclear.

The project, initiated in 2011 at Nanaji Deshmukh Veterinary Science University, received Rs 3.5 crore of the Rs 8 crore originally requested. The investigation, led by Additional Collector Raghuvar Maravi, submitted its findings to the Collector after a formal complaint. *—Agencies*

NO COUNTRY FOR WOMEN

5 men rape Chhattisgarh teen girl in police vehicle

KORBA, 10 JAN

A 19-year-old woman was allegedly raped by five men, including the driver of police a vehicle, in Chhattisgarh's Korba district, police said on Saturday. Two accused, including the driver of Dial 112 police helpline vehicle, have been reportedly taken into custody.

The case was initially registered as a zero FIR at the Civil Lines police station on Friday and later transferred to Bankimongra police station for investigation. Korba Superintendent of Police Siddharth Tiwari said efforts are underway to trace the remaining three suspects.

The incident occurred on the night of 8 January within the jurisdiction of the Bankimongra police station, when one of the five accused, who was known to the victim, called the young woman. The accused allegedly took the girl to a deserted house in Bankimongra, where the driver and four rapeED her. The accused then fled, leaving the then-unconscious woman. The victim managed to reach her home and narrated the ordeal to her family, who took her to the medical college hospital and informed the police. *—PTI*

>>>More on Page 4

BJP appoints Badlapur rape accused as Thane councillor

THANE, 10 JAN

The BJP has appointed Tushar Apte, the then secretary of a school and a co-accused in the Badlapur sexual abuse case, as a 'co-opted' councillor in the Kulgaon-Badlapur Municipal Council in Thane district.

Council chairperson Ruchita Ghorpade has confirmed Apte's appointment. He was greeted after the process of selecting five co-opted councillors of the municipal council was completed on Friday. Two among them were nominated by the BJP, two by the Shiv Sena, and one by the Nationalist Congress Party.

Besides Apte, other nominated councillors are Shagof Gore (BJP), Prabhakar Patil (NCP), and Dilip Baikar and Hemant Chature (Shiv Sena).

Apte, who was then the secretary of the educational institution where the alleged sexual abuse occurred, was booked for failing to report the offence.

A case was registered against the school management under POCSO for not filing a complaint in a case of sexual abuse of children. Apte was arrested 44 days after the incident and granted bail within 48 hours. *— PTI*

>>>More on Page 3

'JANA NAYAGAN' ROW

Film industry rallies against CBFC

CHENNAI, 10 JAN

Leading voices from the Indian film industry have closed ranks against the Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC) over its handling of actor-politician Vijay's stalled release 'Jana Nayagan', with criticism mounting over the impact of certification delays on artistic freedom and film releases.

Filmmaker Ram Gopal Varma described the CBFC as "outdated", arguing that censorship has lost relevance in an era where children freely access violent and explicit content online. In a lengthy post on X following the Madras High Court proceedings on Friday, Varma said it was "foolish" to believe censorship protects audiences. "Censorship doesn't prevent exposure; it only insults viewers," he said, blaming the industry itself for sustaining the system due to a reluctance to question its relevance. Tamil director Mari Selvaraj, known for films centred on caste oppression, urged fellow creators to "raise a loud voice" against such interventions. In a post on Saturday, he warned that the growing "fear" around political cinema posed a serious test of how the state treats artistic expression.

Actor Sivakarthikeyan, speaking after his film 'Parasakthi' secured certification on 9 January, said he was dismayed that both his film and 'Jana Nayagan' ran into last-minute hurdles. He said implementing the changes demanded for 'Parasakthi' was challenging, especially under severe time pressure. *—PTI*

>>>More on Page 3

BMRCL to begin tests on Pink Line from 11 Jan

BENGALURU, 10 JAN

The Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Ltd (BMRCL) announced on Saturday that rolling stock tests will commence on the under-construction Pink Line corridor, a key step towards its commissioning.

The tests will cover the Kalena Agrahara–Tavarekere stretch, spanning 7.5 km, and aim to validate train performance and system integration under real field conditions as part of the statutory approval process.

BMRCL said testing will begin on 11 January and is expected to be completed by mid-April 2026. Rolling stock tests assess trains and components such as bogies, brakes, and electronics, including traction, brake, and oscillation trials at various speeds, along with integration checks for signalling, power, and telecommunication systems. The Pink Line (Reach 6), part of Namma Metro Phase 2, will eventually span 21.25 km, connecting Kalena Agrahara to Nagawara. *—PTI*

PHOTO: SALAR

Forest dept looks for tiger cubs after capturing mom

MYSURU, 10 JAN

A day after capturing an eight-year-old tigress that caused panic among people living in surroundings of Nanjadevanpura of Chamarajanagar taluk near Veeranapura lake, Forest Department officials have intensified the operation to nab its four cubs that were missing from Saturday in surrounding villages. Even though locals heaved a sigh of relief after the tigress that attacked and killed their livestock was captured and remained elusive for more than 20 days, they were still living in fear as its four cubs were missing. As the forest department continued the operation, the Deputy Conservator of Forests BRT Tiger Reserve BS Sripathy asked the villagers living in Nanjanadevanapura, Veeranapura lake surroundings to remain indoors during night hours. *—Salar News*

Rajanna: High Command will decide leadership

BENGALURU, 10 JAN

State Congress leader KN Rajanna on Saturday said that any possible changes in the State government or within the party would be decided solely by the Congress High Command. Speaking in Bengaluru, he said: "If at all any changes are expected in the government and the party in the State, then the party High Command will decide it. Whether or not I am in the Cabinet, I will always be a party worker. There is no power tussle (in Congress), unlike in the BJP." His remarks come amid ongoing political discussions over possible reshuffles in the Karnataka government. *—ANI*

Digital fraud case: Scammers try to dupe Belagavi DC

BELAGAVI, 10 JAN

Cyber fraudsters attempted to cheat the Deputy Commissioner of the Belagavi City Corporation by impersonating the Corporation's Commissioner, in a fresh case of digital identity fraud. The fraudsters created a fake WhatsApp account using the display photo and name of Municipal Commissioner Karthik and sent messages to his Deputy Uday Kumar Talwar, requesting an urgent transfer of Rs 50,000. The sender claimed to be in a meeting and asked that the money be deposited immediately into a bank account. Talwar tried to call the number but after it went unanswered, the DC contacted Karthik on his personal number who confirmed that he did not make the request. Talwar lodged a complaint at the Belagavi CEN Police Station. *—Salar News*

No imposition in Malayalam Bill: Vijayan

Kerala CM says that linguistic minorities can study in their own language, refutes K'taka CM

NEWDELHI/BENGALURU/ T'PURAM, 10 JAN

Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan said that a clause of the Malayalam Language Bill 2025 safeguards the rights of linguistic minorities. The Karnataka government had taken offence to the Bill, saying that it would impose Malayalam on the Kannada-speaking minorities in the border areas of Kasargod.

The Bill proposes to make Malayalam the official language in Kerala, mandating its use across government departments, including education. Currently, both English and Malayalam are the official languages in Kerala.

However, Vijayan noted that it clearly contains a clear and unambiguous non-obstante clause (Clause 7) which explicitly safeguards the rights of linguistic minorities, particularly the Kannada and Tamil speaking communities. He emphasised that the government remains firmly committed to protecting linguistic diversity and ensuring that no language is imposed on any citizen.

Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan PHOTO: PTI

"Key provisions ensure that no language is imposed and linguistic freedom is fully protected. In notified areas, Tamil and Kannada speakers may continue to use their mother tongues for official correspondence with the Secretariat, Heads of Departments, and local offices, with replies issued in the same languages," Vijayan wrote on X. This comes after Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah wrote a letter to him terming the legislation as unconstitutional.

Addressing concerns related to education, Vijayan stated that students whose mother tongue is not Malayalam are free to choose languages offered in schools in line with the National Education Curriculum. "Students from other states or foreign countries are not compelled to appear for Malayalam examinations at the IX, X, or Higher Secondary levels," he clarified.

Similarly, Kerala Law Minister P Rajeev said that Siddaramaiah's stance on the Bill was "wrong", noting that the previous versions of the Bill mandated Malayalam education, but the new Bill makes it optional for linguistic minorities. "He has taken a wrong stand, probably on the instructions of the Congress leadership". *—Agencies*

Must solve language based concerns: HM

BENGALURU, 10 JAN

Home Minister G Parameshwara said that states were carved out on the basis of language and stressed the need to address language-related concerns in border regions.

"Disputes between states" over language occur, Parameshwara told press on Saturday, stressing the need to find a solution for linguistic issues. "Both the CMs should resolve this."

Parameshwara noted that there were 200 Kanada medium schools in the border area of Kasargod, which he claimed would be threatened by the Malayalam Language Bill. The Karnataka Border Areas Development Authority earlhmet Kerala Governor Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar and submitted a memorandum to him seeking the stalling and reconsideration of the bill. *—ANI*

Ashoka slams Priyanka for 'selective silence' on K'taka

BENGALURU, 9 JAN

Opposition Leader R Ashoka on Saturday said Wayanad MP Priyanka Gandhi Vadra was quick to ask the Karnataka government for help whenever Kerala faced challenges, but does not show similar concern when Kannadigas face problems.

On X, he slammed her for "maintaining silence" when the interests of Kannadigas were under threat.

Ashoka said the Bill would amount to an "erosion of linguistic freedom and cultural rights" for lakhs of Kannadigas.

Ashoka also attacked Congress leaders in Karnataka, alleging that they had "bent over backwards" to accommodate Kerala's demands during the Bandipur night traffic controversy but lacked the courage to take a firm stand on issues affecting Kannada language.

Ashoka also claimed that senior Congress leaders discovered humanitarian values while speaking for Rohingya and Bangladeshi nationals, but failed to same show sensitivity to the Kannadiga *—PTI*

Oppn welcomes spl G RAM G session

BENGALURU, 10 JAN

The Opposition BJP and JD(S) welcomed the State government's decision to convene a two-day special session of the Legislative Assembly to discuss the VB-G RAM G Act, which replaces the MGNREGA.

Addressing a joint press meet, Union Minister and JD(S) second-in-command HD Kumaraswamy and BJP State President BY Vijayendra claimed that the Congress was "spreading misinformation" about the Viksit Bharat Guarantee for Rozgar and Ajivika Mission (Gramin) Act (VB-G RAM G).

"We will discuss on the floor of the House what the Congress did to the country through MGNREGA during the UPA era and what PM Narendra Modi-led NDA has done in the past 11 years," Vijayendra said, claiming that the MGNREGA had rampant fund leakages.

"When lakhs of crores of rupees have been spent on the MGNREGA, is it wrong on the part of the Prime Minister, the BJP, or the NDA government to ensure there is no pilferage or leakage of funds?" he asked.

Kumaraswamy added that corruption and leakages are being checked through AI technology, GPS tracking and real-time dashboards, and that special job cards will cover single women, the elderly, persons with disabilities, transgender persons and vulnerable tribal groups.

Vijayendra quipped that the Congress "never believed in schemes but believed in scams".

"The number of workdays has been increased from 100 to 125 days, ensuring greater income security for rural people, with the daily wage fixed at Rs 370," Kumaraswamy said. Payments will be made weekly or within 14 days*—PTI*

State BJP President BY Vijayendra, JD(S) leader HD Kumaraswamy Opposition Leader R Ashok & JD(S) leader Nikhil Kumaraswamy at joint press meet, in Bengaluru, on Saturday PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASAD

PUPPY LOVE

Animal lovers play with dogs during a pet show by ADOPT, at Palace Grounds, in Bengaluru on Saturday PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASAD

Padayatra in every constituency to save MGNREGA: DKS

MANGALURU/ BIDAR, 10 JAN

Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar said that the State government would hold a padayatra in every Assembly constituency in Karnataka to save MGNREGA from 26 January to 2 February.

"To save MGNREGA, AICC has planned one programme. However, as far as Karnataka is concerned, we have planned a different program. We are calling a special session of the Assembly on MGNREGA. We will see that in every Assembly constituency a padyatara is organised to save MGNREGA," the Deputy CM said in Mangaluru.

Each padayatra will cover a distance of five to 10km and will involve panchayat members and labourers to inform people how the Viksit Bharat-Guarantee for Rozgar and Ajeevika Mission (Gramin) (VB-G Ram G) "kills" the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA). He also noted that State government was holding a two-day special session on MGNREGA.

Earlier, the Cabinet passed a resolution rejecting the VB-G Ram G and vowing to move the courts.

Minister Priyank Kharge said that the VB-G-RAM-G Bill violates Article 21 of the Constitution and infringed upon the right to livelihood,weakening the country's federal structure. *—ANI*

State proposes Greater Mysuru City Corporation

BENGALURU, 8 JAN

The State government has issued a notification proposing to expand the jurisdiction of the Mysuru City Municipal Corporation by including the surrounding areas and declaring the expanded region as the 'Greater Mysuru City Corporation'.

The proposal has been issued under Sections 3 and 4 of the Karnataka Municipal Corporations Act, 1976, according to the government notification.

The government has decided to declare a larger urban area having regard to: the population of such area is not less than three lakhs; the density of population in such area is not less than 3,000 inhabitants to 1sqkm area; the revenue generated for local administration is not less than Rs 6 crore per annum; and the percentage of employment in non-agricultural activities is not less than 50 per cent of the total employment. The State has invited objections. *—PTI*

Govt urges Centre to fix fiscal deficits

BENGALURU, 10 JAN

The State government on Saturday urged the Centre to address Karnataka's "shrinking fiscal space" in the Union Budget 2026-27.

Karnataka Revenue Minister Krishna Byre Gowda handed over a representation to Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman in Delhi on Saturday, saying that the State is under mounting pressure due to GST changes, rising social commitments and rapid urbanisation.

On the VB-G RAM G scheme, Gowda said for the State to continue providing livelihood security to the tune of 13 crore person-days, "Karnataka would require Rs 2,000 crore."

Gowda noted that post GST rationalisation, Karnataka's GST growth had declined from 12 per cent to five per cent, resulting in a Rs 5,000 crore shortfall this year and Rs 9,000 crore annually. He also called for a 50:50 sharing of excise duty on tobacco and cess on pan masala.

In agriculture, Gowda noted that the MSP procurement was inadequate for crops affected by gluts and perishability. Karnataka has proposed a Price Deficiency Payment Scheme (PDPS) for eight crops--maize, soybean, mango, chilli, onion, tomato, turmeric and ginger, and requested an "additional allocation of Rs 796 crore under PM-AASHA" for timely rollout in 2026-27.

He also said that Kalyana Karnataka requires "additional Central support beyond State's Rs 5,000 crore annual allocation to bridge Human Development Index (HDI) gaps". *—PTI*

DKS calls for pvt investment to revitalise coastal tourism

MANGALURU, 10 JAN

Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar emphasised the need to attract private investment to generate employment and revitalise tourism in coastal Karnataka. He said the region's untapped potential must be harnessed within the framework of law.

Addressing the Coastal Karnataka Tourism Conclave at a hotel in Mangaluru, Shivakumar noted that several investors had previously shown interest in the region but withdrew due to various constraints.

"The hurdles affecting tourism must be identified and addressed legally. A new tourism policy is needed to give fresh momentum to the coastal belt," he said. "People travel to Goa for beaches, but we have similar beaches here. The potential exists; what is required is proper planning and utilisation," he said.*—PTI*

13 DIFFERENT CASES

10 held for Rs 14L worth of thefts in Yadgir

YADGIR, 10 JAN

Yadgir police have arrested 10 accused linked to 13 separate theft cases and property worth Rs 14.27 lakh has been recovered.

The cases include housebreakings, motorcycle theft, temple theft and livestock theft, registered in various police stations in the district.

Police have identified the accused as Mahesh Moga from Andhra Pradesh (cash theft); Prashanth and Shivakumar (house theft); Halleppa Narasappa of Hattiguduru (theft); Mahadev Hanumant of Allur, Kalaburagi (bike theft); Ashok Kashappa of Mustoor (temple theft); and Anjaneya Narasappa of Raichur (house theft). Vadagera police also arrested Shivappa Sangappa of Bevinahalli for temple theft, while Yadgir Rural police arrested Dasharath Chinya for sheep theft.

Yadgir police cracked the cases after a confession from a suspect PHOTO: SALAR

Superintendent of Police (SP) Prithvik Shankar said on Friday "When suspicious persons who attempted to flee were detained and questioned, they confessed to the thefts. Cash, gold ornaments and motorcycles have been recovered from the accused."

Providing details, the SP said, Kashappa had broken the lock of the Bhagavanty temple in Kanak Nagar and stolen gold taalis of the goddess along with a silver lingadakai and ornaments worth Rs 1.49 lakh. Sangappa committed a theft at the Dyavamma temple in Tadibidi village of Vadagera taluk, stealing the gold taali and nose ring of the deity worth Rs 95,000.

He added that Hanumant had been stealing motorcycles, including a lecturer's bike parked in JP Nagar under the Konanakunte police station limits in Bengaluru. Five motorcycles have been recovered from Hanumant.

The SP said that the police who cracked 13 cases would be awarded certificates and cash rewards. *—Salar News*

Six researchers win Infosys Award 2025 with cash prize of $1,00,000 each

BENGALURU, 10 JAN

Six researchers were awarded the Infosys Prize 2025 at a felicitation ceremony in the City on Saturday.

Now in its 17th year, the prize recognises researchers under the age of 40 for their contributions in six disciplines—Economics, Engineering and Computer Science, Humanities and Social Sciences, Life Sciences, Mathematical Sciences and Physical Sciences, the Infosys Science Foundation said in a statement.

The laureates were conferred a gold medal, a citation and a prize purse of USD 1,00,000 each.

The winners Nikhil Agarwal; Sushant Sachdeva; Andrew Ollett ; Anjana Badrinarayanan ; Sabyasachi Mukherjee; and Karthish Manthiram PHOTO: X @InfosysPrize

The winners are Nikhil Agarwal (Economics), Sushant Sachdeva (Engineering and Computer Science), Andrew Ollett (Humanities and Social Sciences), Anjana Badrinarayanan (Life Sciences), Sabyasachi Mukherjee (Mathematical Sciences) and Karthish Manthiram (Physical Sciences).

The awards were presented by chief guest Randy Schekman, the 2013 Nobel laureate in Physiology/Medicine, who is a professor in the Department of Molecular and Cell Biology at the University of California, Berkeley.

He described India as "a major centre of scholarly activity, both domestically and internationally." *—PTI*

Arms dropped by drone, pigeon seized in J&K

JAMMU, 10 JAN

Authorities in Jammu and Kashmir recovered an arms consignment, reportedly dropped by a Pakistani drone, in a forward area near the International Border in Samba district on Saturday. The package contained two pistols, three magazines, 16 rounds and a grenade. The recovery followed a search by the BSF and Special Operations Group after reports of drone activity near Paloora village, Ghagwal, amid heightened security ahead of Republic Day. Separately, a suspicious pigeon was caught in Kharah village, Akhnoor sector, carrying red and yellow leg rings inscribed with 'Rehmat Sarkar' and 'Rizwan 2025'. The bird's wings were also stamped. It was handed to Pallanwala police, highlighting continued cross-border surveillance issues. *—PTI*

PHOTO: PTI

Delhi issues notice to cop for FIR against Mishra

NEW DELHI, 10 JAN

Delhi Assembly Speaker Vijender Gupta on Saturday issued notices to three senior Punjab Police officers, including the DGP and Jalandhar Commissioner, seeking replies within 48 hours over an FIR against Delhi Law Minister Kapil Mishra. The FIR was filed over a video clip of Assembly proceedings, allegedly "edited and doctored," showing Opposition Leader Atishi accused of insulting Guru Tegh Bahadur. Gupta condemned the use of the Assembly's recording, stating it is the exclusive property of the House, and described the FIR as a breach of privilege and an attack on the Assembly's dignity. He warned that any misuse for political gain would face strict action. *—PTI*

PM to participate in Omkar mantra chanting in Gujarat

NEW DELHI, 10 JAN

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will arrive in Somnath, Gujarat, on Saturday evening to participate in the Somnath Swabhiman Parv celebrations. The festival, held from 7-11 January, honours the sacrifices of citizens who defended the temple and marks 1,000 years since its invasion by Mahmud of Ghazni. Modi will take part in the chanting of the Omkar Mantra on Saturday night, join the Shaurya Yatra on Sunday morning, offer prayers at the temple, and attend a public program. A mega drone show will also be held. The 2026 event marks 75 years since the temple's post-Independence restoration, led by Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, and will feature hundreds of saints & 72 hours of chanting. *—PTI*

Shah announces 3-year campaign against drugs

NEW DELHI, 10 JAN

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Friday announced a three-year nationwide campaign against narcotics, beginning 31 Marc, aimed at making India drug-free and protecting the youth from substance abuse. Addressing the 9th apex-level meeting of the Narco-Coordination Centre (NCORD), Shah said all Central and state agencies would adopt a unified, time-bound strategy, with defined targets and regular reviews. He directed departments to prepare roadmaps by 31 March and establish strong monitoring mechanisms. Shah said the fight against drugs was linked more to narco-terrorism than routine law and order, calling it a conspiracy to damage future generations. He stressed zero tolerance towards drug manufacturers and traffickers, while advocating a humanitarian approach towards victims. *—PTI*

Stalin accuses govt of weaponising censor board

Kamal Haasan seeks relook at CBFC system

CHENNAI, 10 JAN

A controversy surrounding the stalled release of actor-politician Vijay's final film 'Jana Nayagan' has triggered a sharp political exchange in Tamil Nadu, with Chief Minister MK Stalin accusing the BJP-led Union government of misusing the Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC).

Without naming the film, Stalin alleged on X that the Censor Board had become "another weapon" of the BJP, on the lines of central agencies such as the CBI, ED and IT department. His remarks came after 'Jana Nayagan' was referred to a CBFC review committee just days before its scheduled release on 9 January, forcing a postponement.

According to industry sources, there were initial indications that the film would receive a U/A certificate after accepting 27 minor cuts. However, at the last minute, the CBFC chairperson referred the film to a Revising Committee. The delay was reportedly triggered by a complaint from a member of the original examining committee, alleging that certain scenes were "objectionable" and related to religious sentiments and the armed forces.

TN Chief Minister MK Stalin
PHOTO: WIKIPEDIA

The Tamil Nadu BJP hit back strongly. State party chief Nainar Nagenthran questioned Stalin's charge, pointing out that the same CBFC had granted a U/A 16+ certificate to 'Parasakthi', directed by Sudha Kongara and starring Sivakarthikeyan, ahead of its 10 January release, insisting there was no political bias in the certification process.

> **DMK-led alliance would win well over 200 constituencies out of the total 234 segments in the Assembly polls due by March-April this year**
>
> --MK Stalin, TN CM

Meanwhile, 'Jana Nayagan' producer Venkat K Narayana said the delay was due to legal complications.

Adding his voice to the debate, actor-politician Kamal Haasan called for a "principled relook" at India's film certification system. He urged transparent evaluations, defined timelines and written justifications for cuts. *—PTI*

West Bengal govt files caveat in SC in I-PAC raid

KOLKATA, 10 JAN

Police on Saturday started the process of identifying ED officials allegedly involved in the 'theft of documents' from the residence of I-PAC chief Pratik Jain and the consultancy firm's Salt Lake office, a senior officer said.

Police are also trying to ascertain the Enforcement Department (ED) personnel who were present at both locations during the operations, the officer added.

On Saturday morning, officers from Shakespeare Sarani police station visited Jain's residence and collected CCTV camera footage and DVR recordings, he said. "Statements of household staff and security personnel were also recorded. Once identification is complete, notices will be issued to the accused," he added.

TMC Chairperson and West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Friday lodged two police complaints against the ED in connection with the agency's raids at the office of I-PAC and Jain's residence.

Based on the complaints, Kolkata and Bidhannagar Police filed FIRs and initiated investigations.

She lodged her complaints against unknown ED officials and CRPF personnel at the Shakespeare Sarani police station, and against unknown ED sleuths at the Electronic Complex PS under Bidhannagar Police, in connection with the agency's raids at Jain's Loudon Street residence and his Salt Lake office, respectively, on Thursday.

Cases at the Shakespeare Sarani police station were lodged under sections of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita pertaining to criminal intimidation, theft and criminal trespass, as well as under Section 66 of the IT Act, which deals with computer-related offences, criminalising dishonest or fraudulent acts like unauthorised access or data damage, the officer said. *—PTI*

WB Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Friday lodged two police complaints against the ED in connection with the agency's raids PHOTO: PTI

5 held in Kolkata PMMY fraud case in WB

Police have arrested five persons in Purba Jadavpur area here for their alleged involvement in cheating people by promising loans under the Pradhan Mantri MUDRA Yojana (PMMY). The five accused, hailing from states like Karnataka and Bihar, were arrested during a raid at a building in the area. The arrested persons were identified as Amit Khan, Rathin CD, Mohammad Nazimuddin Siddiqui, Vishal Sindhe, and Madhusudan HR. Police also recovered eight smartphones and six keypad mobile phones from their possession. *—PTI*

Kerala Minister Krishnankutty to not contest Assembly polls

PALAKKAD, 10 JAN

Kerala Electricity Minister K Krishnankutty on Saturday indicated his unwillingness to contest in the state assembly polls to be held this year, saying new faces should get a chance.

Krishnankutty, who contested and won as a Janata Dal (Secular) candidate from Chittur assembly constituency, said he will try his best to avoid contesting this time and will ask his party to give an opportunity to the next generation.

The minister also asserted that it does not matter which Left candidate contests from Chittur as it would win in view of the development work worth Rs 3,035 crore carried out in the constituency.

Reacting to the Left's losses in the recent civic polls in the state, Krishnankutty said that it was due to small issues

The minister also said that it was wrong to classify the constituency as an 'A class' mandalam — as contended by the Congress — as the lead was only 34,500 votes in the last assembly polls.

The Kerala unit of the Janata Dal (Secular) has decided to completely sever ties with its national leadership, led by former prime minister HD Deve Gowda, which is allied with the BJP, and will merge with a new political party. *—PTI*

Shah to visit Kerala on 11 Jan

Union Home Minister Amit Shah is scheduled to arrive in Kerala on 11 January to attend various programmes in the state and meet party leaders. BJP Kerala President Rajeev Chandrasekhar had said that Shah will kick off the party's campaign for the assembly polls. He will do 'darshan and pooja' at the Sree Padmanabhaswamy Temple, meet newly elected local body representatives, attend a conclave and meet NDA leaders at BJP office here. *—PTI*

PUNE CIVIC POLLS

Ajit, Sule share stage for manifesto release

PUNE, 10 JAN

NCP and NCP (SP) on Saturday released a joint Pune civic polls manifesto. Ajit Pawar and cousin Supriya Sule shared the dais, signalling closer ties between the factions after their 2023 split.

NCP and NCP (SP), despite being in rival alliances, have joined for the 15 January Pune and Pimpri Chinchwad civic polls.

Ajit Pawar said the manifesto focuses on Pune's civic issues, promising tap water, better roads, traffic relief, cleanliness, hi-tech healthcare, pollution control, slum rehabilitation, free PMPML travel, property tax waiver for small homes, and free tablets for students.

The split came after NCP and NCP (SP) fielded rival candidates in 2024 polls. Ajit Pawar broke away with loyal MLAs to join the Shiv Sena-led government and was later recognised as the real NCP with the 'clock' symbol.

Congress leader Vijay Wadettiwar said the joint NCP–NCP (SP) manifesto shows the factions have come together, amid speculation on Supriya Sule's possible Cabinet induction. He alleged the reunion is driven by power, not ideology or party workers' welfare

Despite being in power with the BJP at the state and Centre, Ajit Pawar has been targeting the local BJP leadership, accusing it of derailing the development of Pune and Pimpri Chinchwad despite receiving substantial funds from both governments. *—PTI*

Supriya Sule with Ajit Pawar PHOTO: ANI

Speaker's brother declares ₹124 cr assets for BMC polls

Makrand Narwekar, brother of Maharashtra Assembly Speaker **Rahul Narwekar**, is among Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation's (BMC) wealthiest candidates with assets of Rs 124.4 crore, up 1,868 per cent in nine years, including his wife's assets, according to his affidavit filed with the Election Commission. He also has Rs 16.68 crore in loans. His total income during FY 2025-26 so far is Rs 2.77 crore. When asked about the sharp rise in assets, Narwekar said he would 'reconfirm and revert shortly' but did not. *—PTI*

Attempt to malign me: Sena leader on audio row

THANE, 10 JAN

Shiv Sena leader Meenakshi Shinde on Saturday hit back at rivals who accused her of using derogatory language against a community in an audio clip. Local political leaders and community activists attributed the remarks to Shinde and demanded action. Shinde claimed the clip could be AI-generated. "This is a deliberate attempt by rivals to defame me and affect the polls, which will not succeed," Shinde told reporters. She has lodged a police complaint regarding the alleged audio. *—PTI*

EC's 'Book-a-Call with BLO' to help during SIR

LUCKNOW, 10 JAN

The Election Commission of India (ECI) has launched a "Book-a-Call with BLO" facility to make voter services more accessible during the ongoing special intensive revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in Uttar Pradesh, even as the claims and objections period remains open till 6 February, 2026.

Voters can now book a phone call with their respective booth level officer (BLO) to seek information or assistance related to the electoral roll, including inclusion, deletion or correction of details, according to an official statement, .

The service is available through the ECI portal voters.eci.gov.in and the ECINET mobile application. After logging in with a registered mobile number or completing the sign-up process using an OTP, voters can book a call by entering their EPIC or reference number, or alternatively by providing details such as state, district, assembly constituency and booth number. The concerned BLO will contact the voter within 48 hours.

The draft electoral roll for Uttar Pradesh was published on Tuesday after the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) excluded 2.89 crore voters and retained 12.55 crore voters.

Chief Electoral Officer of Uttar Pradesh Navdeep Rinwa appealed to voters to make maximum use of the facility for queries related to the SIR. *—PTI*

CONG UNVEILS 45-DAY NATIONWIDE MGNREGA BACHAO SANGRAM

NEW DELHI, 10 JAN

The Indian National Congress has initiated its 45-day nationwide campaign, dubbed the MGNREGA Bachao Sangram, to protest against the repeal of the UPA-era rural employment law.

This campaign, which includes press conferences at every district, demands the withdrawal of the VB-G RAM G Act and the restoration of MGNREGA in its original form, alongside the right to work and empowerment of panchayats.

Congress General Secretary Jairam Ramesh announced, "The Congress is committed to seeing this struggle through until we secure the restoration of the right to work, livelihood, and accountability that the Modi Government has dismantled." *—PTI*

My family destroyed 'great legacy': Lalu's daughter

PATNA, 10 JAN

RJD President Lalu Prasad's daughter **Rohini Acharya** on Saturday criticised the members of her family for allegedly destroying a legacy, and claimed that outsiders are not needed for that.

"There is no need for outsiders to destroy the great legacy that was created and established with a great effort... our loved ones are enough for that. 'Newly made own' and 'our own' are more than enough", Prasad's daughter wrote a post on X.

Without naming anyone, Acharya alleged that attempts were being made to "wipe out signs of those who gave identity and existence to a legacy".

After the RJD was drubbed in the Bihar assembly polls last year, Acharya, a doctor by qualification, who chose to become a homemaker and settled down with her Singapore-based husband, had announced that she was "quitting politics" and severed ties with the family.

It was speculated that she was "unhappy" over the expulsion of Tej Pratap Yadav, elder son of Prasad, from the party.

The RJD's seat tally slipped from 75 to 24 in the Bihar assembly polls last year. *—PTI*

'INDIA MUST PROTECT ITSELF'

We have to avenge our history: Doval

NEW DELHI, 10 JAN

National Security Advisor (NSA) Ajit Doval on Saturday said India has to strengthen itself not just at the borders, but in every other way, including economically, to "avenge" a painful history of attacks and subjugation.

Speaking as the guest of honour at the opening ceremony of the Viksit Bharat Young Leaders Dialogue here, Doval invoked the struggles and sacrifices of freedom fighters like Mahatma Gandhi, Subhash Chandra Bose and Bhagat Singh to drive home his point.

"You are lucky that you were born in an independent India. I was born in a colonised India. Our ancestors fought for independence and went through so many trials and tribulations," the 81-year-old former Intelligence Bureau director told the gathering of 3,000 young delegates from across the country.

Without naming Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Doval added: "His commitment, dedication, and hard work are an inspiration for all of us. As Napoleon once said, 'I am not afraid of 1,000 lions led by a sheep, but of 1,000 sheep led by a lion.'"

Doval said India had been a progressive civilisation that did not attack others, but its lack of security awareness had proved costly. "Did we learn that lesson?" he asked, warning that forgetting it would be tragic.

He said all global conflicts stem from security concerns, driven by attempts to impose one's terms on others.

India, he stressed, must protect itself with resolve. *—PTI*

National Security Advisor (NSA) Ajit Doval PHOTO: ANI

PHOTO: ANI

ONGC extinguishes gas well fire in Andhra Pradesh

MORI, 10 JAN

The fire triggered by a gas blowout at an ONGC-owned well here in Dr BR Ambedkar Konaseema district was extinguished on Saturday morning.Following the fire suppression, technical teams successfully capped the well, the company said. Konaseema District Joint Collector T Nisanthi said the blowout has been fully controlled and the fire has been snuffed out. "Blowout (was) fully controlled this (Saturday) morning only," she told PTI. A massive fireball reaching up to a height of 20 metres and a width of 25 metres erupted on 5 January near Mori and Irusumanda villages, following a gas leak at Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC)-owned well Mori-5. — *PTI*

Goa jail official celebrates goon's release, suspended

PANAJI, 10 JAN

Prison authorities in Goa on Saturday suspended the warden of a central jail after a video emerged, purportedly showing him celebrating with a gangster following his release from the jail, an official said. The undated reel video, involving warden Laxman Padloskar of the Central Jail at Colvale, around 20 km from the state capital, went viral on social media recently. The video shows Padloskar celebrating with gangster Amogh Naik and his supporters after he walks out of the jail. The jail warden is seen spraying some liquid, presumably liquor, from a bottle on Naik, and later posing for a group photo with the gangster. — *PTI*

PHOTO: ANI

Delhi records coldest winter morning so far

NEW DELHI, 10 JAN

New Delhi recorded a minimum temperature of 4.2 degrees Celsius on Saturday, which was 2.7 degree Celsius below the season's average, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said. With this, Delhi recorded the coldest morning of the winter since 2024. The previous coldest January day was recorded on 15 January 2024, when the minimum temperature plunged to 3.3 degrees Celsius. Today's reading was followed by Friday's second-coldest morning of the season, when the minimum temperature dropped to 4.6 degrees Celsius. — *PTI*

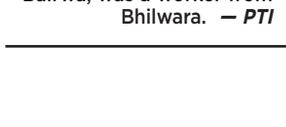


PHOTO: SCREENGRAB

One dead, 16 injured in Jaipur car crash

JAIPUR, 10 JAN

One person was killed and at least 16 others injured after a luxury car lost control and ploughed into roadside food stalls in Jaipur's Patrakar Colony on Friday night, police said. The incident occurred near Kharbas Circle when an Audi, allegedly racing with another vehicle, hit a road divider before crashing into the stalls. Station House Officer Madan Kadwasra said more than 50 people were present at the scene. "The car hit 10 stalls, ran over more than 16 people and stopped after hitting a tree about 100 meters away," he added. Another car overturned due to the impact. The dead, Ramesh Bairwa, was a worker from Bhilwara. — *PTI*

Girl gangraped in closed WB factory, 2 arrested

Girl had gone to the plant's premises with a friend

KOLKATA, 10 JAN

A girl was allegedly gangraped at an abandoned factory in Hooghly district, a senior police officer said on Saturday. Two persons have been arrested in connection with the incident, the officer said.

The 16-year-old girl had entered the closed Hindmotor factory premises on Thursday evening with a friend.

"It is alleged that the suspects, along with their associates, sexually assaulted the minor inside the premises," the officer said.

"Statements of the arrested suspects are being recorded, and the case is being investigated from all angles," he said, adding that investigation is underway.

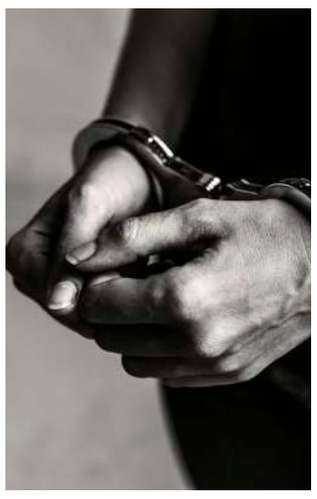


PHOTO: FREEPIK

Police have slapped charges under the POCSO Act in the case, he said.

One of the arrested has been identified as Dipankar Adhikari, also known as Sonai, reportedly a Trinamool Congress youth leader of the locality, he said. The other person arrested is the girl's alleged boyfriend, who is also a minor, the officer said.

"We are looking for two more associates of the suspects. They are on the run, and a search is underway to trace them. A Test Identification (TI) parade will be conducted on Saturday as part of the investigation," the officer said. — *PTI*

MAN GETS 10 YEARS IMPRISONMENT FOR RAPING HIS OWN DAUGHTER

The court here sentenced a man to 10 years of rigorous imprisonment for raping his minor daughter, police said on Thursday. Additional Session Judge Jasmine Sharma also imposed a fine of Rs 50,000 on the convict. An anganwadi worker filed a complaint on 24 August 2023, that her 16-year-old daughter told her that her father had raped her and had threatened to kill her if she told anyone. After some days the police arrested the man who belongs to West Bengal, they added. — *PTI*

Sabarimala priest arrested in gold theft hospitalised

THIRU'PURAM, 10 JAN

Thantri Kandharar Rajeevar, the chief priest (Tantri) of Sabarimala, was shifted to Thiruvananthapuram General Hospital on Saturday following health complications. He had been lodged at the Special Sub Jail after being arrested by the Crime Branch in connection with the Sabarimala gold theft case.

The controversy involves irregularities in the temple's gold plating. In 1998, industrialist Vijay Mallya donated 30.3 kg of gold and 1,900 kg of copper for the sanctum sanctorum and wooden carvings. Investigators say Rajeevar knew, but allegedly did not report its removal, instead handing it over to private individuals without following protocols.The CPI (M) and the Congress reacted cautiously over the arrest of Sabarimala tantri (chief priest) Rajeevaru in the gold loss case.

However, the BJP questioned the timing of the Tantri's arrest and suggested that the move was a deliberate diversionary tactic by the Left government. — *ANI*

3 more held in Turkman Gate violence; 16 arrested so far

Security personnel interact with children during Friday prayers after an anti-encroachment drive during the intervening night of Tuesday and Wednesday near the Faiz-e-Elahi mosque in New Delhi triggered violence **PHOTO: PTI**

NEW DELHI, 10 JAN

Delhi Police has arrested three more persons accused in the Turkman Gate stone-pelting incident, taking the total number of arrests in the case to 16, an official said on Saturday.

The arrested people have been identified as Mohd Naved, 44, Mohd Faiz, 20, Mohd Ubaidullah, 23, Mohd Arib, 25, Mohd Kashif, 25, Mohd Kaif, 23, Mohd Adnan, 37, Sameer Hussain, 40, Mohd Athar, 20, Shahnawaz Alam, 55, Mohd Imran, 28, Mohd Imran alias Raju, 36, Mohd Affan, 20, Mohd Adil, 20, Mohd Aamir Hamza, 22 and Mohd Ubaidullah, 26.

"On Friday night, we arrested three people involved in stone-pelting. So far, we have arrested 16 people. Further investigation is underway," Additional Commissioner of Police (Central) Nidhin Valsan said.A large number of police and paramilitary personnel have been deployed in sensitive pockets to maintain law and order, while senior officers are supervising arrangements on the ground for Friday prayers.

The police are also conducting drone surveillance to keep a tight vigil in the area, officials said, adding that the situation is peaceful and under control. — *PTI*

Smog engulfs Kartavya Path near the India Gate in New Delhi **PHOTO: PTI**

Delhi tops in PM10, second in PM2.5 pollutants

NEW DELHI, 10 JAN

Delhi recorded the highest annual average PM10 concentration in the country in 2025 at 197 micrograms per cubic metre, nearly three times higher than the national standard of 60 micrograms per cubic metre, according to an analysis.

The capital exceeded the PM10 standard on 285 days during the year, the Centre for Research on Energy and Clean Air (CREA) said in its analysis.

On finer particles, Delhi was the second most polluted city in India for PM2.5 in 2025, with an annual average concentration of 96 micrograms per cubic metre, almost twice the national standard of 40 micrograms per cubic metre.

Delhi exceeded the daily PM2.5 standard in 212 days in 2025, the report said.

The analysis said PM2.5 levels remain high across the National Capital Region, with 12 out of 14 NCR cities breaching the PM2.5 standard.

On funding, CREA said Rs 13,415 crore has been released under the National Clean Air Programme and Fifteenth Finance Commission grants so far, of which Rs 9,929 crore, or 74 per cent, has been utilised. Delhi was among the weakest performers in utilisation of clean air funds, with only 33 per cent of the allocated amount spent.

The report concluded that seven years into the NCAP, cities including Delhi remain far from meeting air quality standards, and the programme's intended 40 per cent PM10 reduction target is no longer achievable within its current time frame. — *PTI*

SIT grills ex-BJP MLA in Ankita Bhandari murder

HARIDWAR, 10 JAN

Expelled BJP leader Suresh Rathore appeared before a special investigation team and was questioned for more than six hours, in connection with the Ankita Bhandari murder case. Rathore appeared before the SIT after the Uttarakhand High Court granted him protection from arrest.

He was summoned for questioning after actor Urmila Sanawar released audio and video clips claiming to show Rathore referring to a "VIP" linked to the Ankita Bhandari murder. Sanawar, who says she is Rathore's second wife, later alleged in another clip that the "VIP" was BJP leader Dushyant Kumar Gautam. She appeared before the SIT on Thursday and said she was questioned for over five hours.

Rathore said the allegations against him were aimed at tarnishing his image and were "baseless." He later told reporters he had shared all relevant facts and handed over phone recordings, adding that he would continue to cooperate with the investigation. Several FIRs have been registered against Rathore and Sanawar in Dehradun and Haridwar.

Ankita Bhandari, 19, a receptionist at a resort in Uttarakhand's Pauri district, was murdered in 2022. Fresh allegations by Sanawar reignited protests and calls for a CBI probe, which Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami recommended. — *PTI*

Bombing forces Manipur petrol pumps to stay shut

Woman sells petrol in bottles by the roadside during an indefinite shutdown of fuel outlets, called by petroleum dealers, following threats and a bomb blast at a fuel depot in Imphal **PHOTO: ANI**

IMPHAL, 10 JAN

Two days after a bomb attack at a fuel station in Bishnupur district, the Manipur Petroleum Dealers Fraternity (MPDF) announced an indefinite closure of all petrol pumps in the "valley area and its peripherals" starting from Saturday until an "immediate attention and amicable solution" is provided.

On Thursday night, unidentified miscreants hurled a bomb at a fuel station in Moirang, Bishnupur district, causing a powerful explosion. Fortunately, no one was injured in the incident. In response, the Manipur Petroleum Dealers Fraternity demanded that the government take strict measures to prevent any similar incidents in the future, including enhancing the security of petrol pumps, as well as the safety of dealers and their staff.

The MPDF, in a letter to Governor Ajay Kumar Bhalla, said, "Though the state authorities have taken up strict actions towards the safety of petrol pump/dealers, we are still facing severe threats as evidenced from the bomb blast on Thursday night."

The MPDF also asked the "government to take full in case of any future incidents like bomb blasts, kidnapping, and compensate for the damage to petrol pumps and also monetary compensation if dealers or staff get injured or killed in such incidents henceforth." — *PTI*

Aditya-L1 decodes how solar storms affect Earth

CHENNAI, 10 JAN

The ISRO on Saturday said its Aditya-L1 solar mission has provided new insights into how a powerful solar storm can impact the Earth's magnetic shield.

"The most severe effects occurred during the impact of the turbulent region of the solar storm," the space agency said in a statement.

In a breakthrough study published in the 'Astrophysical Journal' in December 2025, ISRO scientists and research students analysed a major space weather event that struck Earth in October 2024.

The study used observations from Aditya-L1, India's first solar observatory, along with data from other international space missions to decode the impact of a massive eruption of solar plasma from the Sun.

"Space weather refers to conditions in space caused by solar activity which can affect satellites and power grids on Earth," the statement said.

ISRO said the turbulent region of the solar storm "strongly compressed Earth's magnetic field, pushing it close to the Earth and briefly exposing some satellites to harsh space conditions."

The study also revealed that during the turbulent phase, currents in the auroral region (high latitudes) super-intensified, a process that could heat the upper atmosphere and lead to enhanced atmospheric escape. — *PTI*

PSLV LIFT OFF TOMORROW

ISRO to kick off 2026 launches with Earth Observation Satellite

An ISRO launch vehicle getting ready for lift off **PHOTO: X/ISRO**

CHENNAI, 10 JAN

The ISRO will kick off its 2026 launch calendar on 12 January with the PSLV C62 mission to deploy the EOS-N1 Earth Observation Satellite and 14 other payloads into space.

Undertaken by the NewSpace India Ltd (NSIL), the commercial arm of ISRO, the 14 other co-passenger satellites belong to domestic and overseas customers.

"The integration of the vehicle and the satellites has been completed and pre-launch checks are in progress. The PSLV-C62 mission is proposed to lift-off on 12 January at 10.17 hours, from the first launch pad of the Satish Dhawan Space Centre, Sriharikota," the ISRO said on Saturday.

The 25-hour countdown is scheduled to commence on 11 January, for the mission which would be the 64th flight of the PSLV. The Earth Observation Satellite has been built jointly by Thailand and the United Kingdom.

The the 'Earth Observation Satellite,' built by Thailand and the UK, will fly piggyback along with 13 other satellites, which would be deployed into the sun-synchronous orbit 17 minutes after lift-off.

However, the separation of the fourth stage of the rocket (PS4) and demonstration of the Kestrel Initial Technology Demonstrator (KID) is expected to take place around two hours after the launch. — *PTI*

ED attaches Rs 585 crore in realty scam

NEW DELHI, 10 JAN

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Saturday said it has attached hundreds of acres of land in Haryana and Uttar Pradesh worth over Rs 580 crore in a money laundering case against Delhi-NCR-based real estate company ADEL Landmarks Ltd. (formerly Era Landmarks Ltd.) and its promoters, Hem Singh Bharana and Sumit Bharana.

An order under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) was issued on Friday for the provisional attachment of 340 acres of land in Gurugram, Faridabad, Palwal and Bahadurgarh in Haryana, and Meerut and Ghaziabad in Uttar Pradesh, with an estimated total value of Rs 585.46 crore.

The case stems from 74 FIRs and chargesheets filed by Haryana and Delhi police, accusing the company and its promoters of cheating numerous customers by failing to deliver the promised flats and residential units to buyers even after 12 to 19 years. — *PTI*

DELAYS AMID DENSE FOG

Passengers rush to board trains on a crowded platform at Patna railway station on Saturday as dense fog delayed 36 trains by one to five hours. Over 100 trains across India faced delays or cancellations due to fog
PHOTO: PTI

After 50 yrs, Iran's exiled prince eyes comeback

He has been in exile for nearly 50 years. His father — Iran's shah — was so widely hated that millions took the streets against him in 1979, forcing him from power. Nevertheless, Iran's Crown Prince Reza Pahlavi is trying to position himself as a player in his country's future.

Pahlavi successfully spurred protesters onto the streets Thursday night in a massive escalation of the protests sweeping Iran.

Initially sparked by the Islamic Republic's ailing economy, the demonstrations have become a serious challenge to its theocracy, battered by years of nationwide protests and a 12-day war in June launched by Israel that saw the US bomb nuclear enrichment sites.

What is unknown is how much real support the 65-year-old Pahlavi, who is in exile in the US, has in his homeland. Do protesters want a return of the Peacock Throne, as his father's reign was known? Or are the protesters just looking for anything that is not Iran's Shiite theocracy?

Pahlavi has issued calls, rebroadcast by Farsi-language satellite news channels and websites abroad, for Iranians to return to the streets Friday night.

"Over the past decade, Iran's protest movement and dissident community have been increasingly nationalist in tone and tenor," said Behnam Ben Taleblu, an Iran expert with the Washington-based Foundation for Defence of Democracies, which faces sanctions from Tehran.

Pahlavi's profile rose again during President Donald Trump's first term. Still, Trump and other world leaders have been hesitant to embrace him, given the many cautionary tales in the Middle East and elsewhere of Western governments putting their faith in exiles long estranged from their homelands.

Iranian state media, which for years mocked Pahlavi as being out of touch and corrupt, blamed "monarchist terrorist elements" for the demonstrations Thursday night during which vehicles were burned and police kiosks attacked.

Crown Prince of Iran Reza Pahlavi ***PHOTO: PTI***

BORN INTO LUXURY

Born 31 October, 1960, Pahlavi lived in a gilded world of luxury as the crown prince to Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi.

Mohammad Reza had inherited the throne from his own father, an army officer who seized power with support from the British.

Mohammad Reza's rule was cemented by a 1953 CIA-backed coup, and he cooperated closely with the Americans, who sold the autocratic ruler billions of dollars of weapons and spied on the Soviet Union from Iran.

The young Pahlavi was schooled at the eponymous Reza Pahlavi School, set up within the walls of Niavaran Palace in northern Tehran. A biographer of his father noted he once played rock music in the palace during a New Year's Eve visit to Tehran by then-US President Jimmy Carter.

But the fall of the Peacock Throne loomed.

While successfully riding rising oil prices in the 1970s, deep economic inequality set in during the Shah's rule and his feared SAVAK intelligence agency became notorious for the torture of dissidents.

Millions across the country participated in protests against the Shah, uniting secular leftists, labour unions, professionals, students and Muslim clergy. As the crisis reached a fever pitch, the shah was doomed by his inability to act and poor decisions while secretly fighting terminal cancer.

In 1978, Crown Prince Reza left his homeland for flight school at a US air base in Texas. A year later, his father fled Iran during the onset of what became known as the Islamic Revolution.

YEARS IN EXILE

But what followed has been nearly five decades in exile.

Pahlavi attempted to gain influence abroad. In 1986, The Washington Post reported that the CIA supplied the prince's allies "a miniaturized television transmitter for an 11-minute clandestine broadcast" to Iran by Pahlavi that pirated the signal of two stations in the Islamic Republic.

That did not happen. Pahlavi largely lived abroad in the US, while his mother, the Shahbanu Farah Pahlavi, lived in Paris.

Circles of diehard Iranian monarchists in exile have long touted dreams of the Pahlavi dynasty returning to power. But Pahlavi has been hampered in gaining wider appeal by a number of factors: bitter memories of his father's rule; the perception that he and his family are out of touch with their homeland; and repression inside Iran that aims to silence any opposition sentiment.

Pahlavi has sought to have a voice through social media videos, as well as Farsi-language news channels like Iran International highlighting his calls for protests.

The channel also aired QR codes that led to information for security force members within Iran to cooperate with him.

"My focus right now is on liberating Iran, and I will find any means that I can, without compromising the national interests and independence, with anyone who is willing to give us a hand, whether it is the US or the Saudis or the Israelis or whomever it is," he said in 2017. *—PTI*

SALAR سالار

Here's why Trump is obsessed with Greenland

US President Donald Trump's presidency has repeatedly been marked by a strong emphasis on territorial expansion and strategic dominance. Days after a US military operation in Venezuela that led to the capture of its leader, Nicolas Maduro and his wife, attention has now shifted to Greenland, with Trump once again intensifying efforts to bring the Arctic territory under American control.

The renewed push has reignited anxiety across Europe and drawn sharp criticism from several US allies. For decades, Washington has viewed Greenland as strategically important, and the Trump administration has once more placed the island at the centre of its Arctic agenda by reviving discussions around altering the status of the Danish territory.

Trump first publicly expressed interest in acquiring Greenland during his first term in 2019, likening a potential deal to a "large real estate purchase." Leaders in Nuuk and Copenhagen, however, rejected the proposal, stressing that Greenland was not for sale or transfer.

After returning to office following his victory in the 2024 US Presidential Election, Trump revived his offer from his first term to purchase Greenland, which was again turned down.

On Tuesday, the White House said it was considering "a range of options" to acquire Greenland, with Press Secretary Karoline Leavitt stating during a briefing that the use of military force was not off the table.

Leavitt said President Trump had made it clear that "acquiring Greenland is a national security priority of the United States" and was vital to deterring adversaries in the Arctic region.

In the late 19th century, after buying Alaska in 1867 from the Russians, US expansionists such as then Secretary of State William H Seward floated the idea of adding Greenland and Iceland to the American sphere. In 1946, President Harry Truman's administration made the first formal bid, proposing to pay Denmark 100 million dollars in gold, partly even discussing swaps involving Alaskan territory. Denmark, however, refused to sell the island.

Greenland's importance lies in both its strategic location between the US, Europe and Russia and its vast natural resources.

According to the Geological Survey of Denmark and Greenland (GEUS), the island holds an estimated 36.1 billion tonnes of rare earth elements. Economically recoverable reserves are estimated at about 1.5 million tonnes, according to the US Geological Survey (USGS).

GEUS has also identified deposits of graphite, lithium and copper--minerals defined by the International Energy Agency (IEA) as critical for the global energy transition. While Greenland's copper reserves are limited, its uranium resources are considered strategically significant, though mining has been banned since 2021.

As per the National Geological Survey, it is estimated that graphite resources in Greenland are at six million tons, which is approximately 0.75 per cent of the global total calculated by the USGS.

As for lithium, also a component in batteries and whose demand the IEA says could increase eightfold by 2040, Greenland's resources have been estimated at 235,000 tonnes, which is approximately 0.20 per cent of the global figure.

Although seemingly abundant, there has been no industrial drilling for oil or gas in Greenland, although three oil exploration licenses are active in the east of the territory. Which answers our very question: "Why is the US keen on acquiring Greenland?"

Meanwhile, on 6 January, in a letter released by the Danish Prime Minister's Office on X, the leaders reaffirmed Greenland's status within the transatlantic alliance, stating, "The Kingdom of Denmark - including Greenland - is part of NATO."

Foreign ministers of Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden have also jointly reaffirmed their collective commitment to preserving security, stability and cooperation in the Arctic, underscoring their support for a stronger and more vigilant NATO presence in the region.

In a response to the NATO Joint Statement, US President Trump, on 7 January, launched a sharp attack on the intergovernmental military alliance, the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), claiming that the alliance depended entirely on Washington for its survival, shortly after European leaders pushed back against his remarks on taking over Greenland and reaffirming NATO unity.

In a post on Truth Social, Trump said that before his intervention, most NATO members were not meeting their defence spending commitments and were relying on Washington to shoulder the burden.

"Remember, for all of those big NATO fans, they were at 2 per cent GDP, and most weren't paying their bills, UNTIL I CAME ALONG. The USA was, foolishly, paying for them! I, respectfully, got them to 5 per cent GDP, AND THEY PAY, immediately. Everyone said that couldn't be done, but it could, because, beyond all else, they are all my friends," Trump said. *—ANI*

US President Donald Trump first publicly expressed interest in acquiring Greenland during his first term in 2019, likening a potential deal to a 'large real estate purchase' ***PHOTO: PTI***

LETTERS write to us at salarenglishdigital@gmail.com

Kerala church-run daily questions govt's claims on Christian minorities

KHRC Chairman Justice JB Koshy hands over his commission report on the problems faced by Christian minorities to Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan, in Thiruvananthapuram on 17 May, 2025 ***PHOTO: ANI***

A strong editorial published on Friday in Deepika, the Kerala Catholic Church-run daily, has questioned the Left government's claim that most recommendations of the Justice JB Koshy Commission have already been implemented, and accused the government of keeping the Christian community "in the dark".

The editorial comes a day after Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan said the CPI(M)-led LDF government had taken "all possible steps" to implement the Commission's recommendations, and announced a stakeholders' meeting on 6 February.

His remarks are widely seen as part of an effort to reach out to Christian voters ahead of the upcoming Assembly elections.

The Koshy Commission was appointed on 5 November, 2020, during the first Vijayan government, to study the educational and economic backwardness and welfare of Christian minorities in Kerala. The Commission submitted its report in May 2023 to the second Vijayan government.

However, Deepika said the report has not been made public even after more than two-and-a-half years of repeated demands.

"What the Chief Minister wrote on Facebook and explained at the press conference is based on the notion that the Christian minority in Kerala is merely imaginary," the editorial said.

Referring to the Chief Minister's claim that "most of the recommendations in the report have already been implemented," the paper said this had happened "without even a single Christian knowing about it".

"Sir, at least now release that report," the editorial said.

"It is so that this community can identify the benefits which it has been unable to find despite all efforts, and express its gratitude."

At a press conference on Thursday, Vijayan had said there was "no need for any concern regarding this issue".

He said his government had examined all 284 recommendations and 45 sub-recommendations submitted by the Commission.

"Seventeen departments have fully implemented the recommendations, while action has been completed on 220 recommendations and sub-recommendations," the Chief Minister had said.

According to him, seven recommendations are still being processed for submission to the Cabinet.

Vijayan had said recommendations that could be implemented under existing laws were taken up without delay.

However, he added that some proposals required changes in state or central laws, court directions, or approvals from other departments, which had slowed down implementation.

"To address such issues, directions have been issued to take prompt decisions through inter-departmental consultations," he had said.

The Chief Minister also announced that a meeting of stakeholders would be held on 6 February at the Secretariat to discuss the remaining recommendations. He said several review meetings had already been held, including one chaired by him on 17 February, 2025, and multiple discussions led by the Chief Secretary and the Minority Welfare Minister.

Vijayan dismissed reports suggesting that the government had failed to act on the Commission's recommendations, calling them "misleading".

However, Deepika questioned these claims, saying that despite repeated assurances, "no one has been able to find any sign or result of the implementation of even a single recommendation".

> His remarks are widely seen as part of an effort to reach out to Christian voters ahead of the upcoming Assembly elections.

"The Christian community will not relinquish its right to know which recommendations were implemented, when, where, and how," the editorial said.

The paper also pointed out that the Commission had analysed 4.87 lakh complaints and submissions from various churches and Christian organisations before preparing its report.

Protests were held after the government failed to act, following which Minority Welfare Minister V Abdurahiman announced in December 2023 that the recommendations would be implemented "immediately".

"Nothing happened over 21 months," the editorial said, adding that it was only after renewed protests that the government claimed most recommendations had already been implemented.

The editorial raised sharp questions-- "What exactly is the problem? Who is the government afraid of? If the welfare measures given to the Christian minority are spoken about, will that create any tension in society? Or is the claim of implementation simply false?"

It also said the 220 recommendations claimed to be implemented had "not brought about any change whatsoever" in the Christian community.

Referring to earlier controversies, the paper cited the uncertainty faced by around 16,000 teachers in Christian management institutions and the government's interventions in school uniform issues, saying these reflected the government's attitude towards the community.

"The report must be made public," the editorial said. "Christians do not want any backdoor benefits."

Quoting a line from the film Echo, the editorial concluded: "Sometimes protection and control may feel the same."

It added that while the Commission was presented as a measure for protection before the last Assembly election, withholding the report while claiming implementation ahead of the next election "shows signs of control".

"But in a democracy," the editorial said, "isn't real control ultimately at the fingertips of the people?" *—PTI*

PHOTO: FREEPIK

Judge blocks Trump from cutting child care funding

WASHINGTON, 10 JAN

A federal judge has ruled that the Trump administration cannot block federal funding for child care programmes benefiting families in California, Colorado, Illinois, Minnesota, and New York. A recently announced policy freezing funds for three grant programmes was immediately impacting the states, creating "operational chaos." The Department of Health and Human Services claimed it halted funding due to suspicions that benefits were being improperly allocated to unauthorized immigrants, though no evidence was provided. Judge Arun Subramanian acknowledged the states' legal standing "to protect the status quo" for at least 14 days while deliberations continue. These states rely on over $10 billion annually from these programmes. *—PTI*

Pakistan's Aghan deportation is unlawful: Amnesty

ISLAMABAD, 10 JAN

Amnesty has urged Pakistan to stop deporting Afghan refugees, describing the country's 'Illegal Foreigners Repatriation Plan', now in its final phase, as "unlawful due to its violation of the principle of non-refoulement". Secretary General Agnes Callamard acknowledged Pakistan's historical support for refugees but urged a reconsideration of the repatriation plan announced in September 2023. The organization noted a lack of transparency and due process in the deportation of Afghan nationals, advocating for improved pathways for refugees. Additionally, Amnesty voiced concerns over Pakistan's Twenty-Seventh Constitutional Amendment, describing it as a significant risk to judicial independence and the rule of law. *—PTI*

Pakistan, US launch joint military exercises

KARACHI, 10 JAN

Pakistan and the US have started joint anti-terrorism military exercises at the National Counter Terrorism Centre (NCTC) in Punjab's Kharian district. The Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) said that the 13th Pakistan-United States bilateral joint exercise, 'Inspired Gambit-2026', commenced Friday. The NCTC serves as a key facility for joint anti-terrorism exercises by Pakistan with international partners. The two-week exercise is being conducted in the Counter Terrorism domain, involving contingents from the both armies, the ISPR said. According to the ISPR, the exercise is aimed at enhancing mutual understanding and interoperability through the sharing of counter-terrorism experiences. *—PTI*

Death toll rises in Fillipino landfill, life detected

MANILA, 10 JAN

At least four workers have died, and more than 30 others remain missing following a catastrophic garbage avalanche at a landfill in Cebu City, Philippines, on Thursday. Twelve injured workers have been rescued from the debris at the waste management facility in Binaliw. Rescue teams, comprising police, firefighters, and disaster-response personnel, have intensified their search efforts, detecting signs of life in specific areas of the collapse. Cebu City Mayor Nestor Archival stated that, "Safety of responders remains paramount due to hazards such as unstable debris and acetylene risks." Survivor Jaylord Antigua described the traumatic incident, recalling, "It was traumatic. I feared that it was my end, so this is like my second life." *—PTI*

Demonstrations began on 28 December over the collapse of the Iranian rial currency and has spread to nearly every province *PHOTO: SCREENGRAB*

Iran clamps down on protesters

Trump threatens attack as blackout continues

WASHINGTON, 10 JAN

Protests across Iran neared the two-week mark Saturday, with the country's government intensifying its crackdown on demonstrators. The internet shutdown continues and phone lines cut off, gauging the demonstrations was difficult. News Agency said that the death toll in the protests was at least 65 people, while at least 2,300 others were detained.

Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei cryptically said on X that US President Donald Trump had the blood of more than 1,000 Iranians on his hands, a day after saying that the protesters were acting on behalf of the US and Israel. It was not clear if he was referring to the death toll from the protests or the 12-day war with Israel, where at least 1,000 Iranians were killed.

Similarly, Iranian opposition leaders have reported heavy gunfire, and said that the death toll was higher than the 12-day war. Salar could not independently verify the toll. Iran's Attorney General, Mohammad Movahedi Azad, warned that anyone taking part in protests will be considered an "enemy of God," a death-penalty charge. The statement carried by Iranian state television said even those who "helped rioters" would face the charge.

The US also escalated its rhetoric against Tehran. "It looks to me that the people are taking over certain cities," Trump said. "We're watching the situation carefully... If they start killing people like they have in the past, we will get involved. We will be hitting them very hard where it hurts, and that doesn't mean boots on the ground."

Iran's exiled crown Prince Reza Pahlavi also signalled that he would soon return to Iran as he urged protesters on.

Fars news agency released a video where a protester appeared to fire a long gun, while others set fires and threw gasoline bombs at a government compound.

The Young Journalists' Club reported that protesters killed three Revolutionary Guard in Gachsaran city. A security official was reportadly stabbed to in Hamadan province, a police officer killed in Bandar Abbas and Gilan.

The demonstrations began on 28 December following the collapse of the Iranian rial currency, which used to trade at over 1.4 million to now just USD 1. *—Agencies*

Will take Greenland whether they like it or not: Trump

WASHINGTON, 10 JAN

President Donald Trump said that the US will take Greenland whether it "likes or not," justifying his claim to the semi-autonomous region of Denmark for national security.

"Because if we don't do it, Russia or China will take over Greenland. And we're not going to have Russia or China as a neighbour," Trump said on Friday during a meeting accompanied by Vice President JD Vance, Secretary of State Marco Rubio and oil executives at the White House.

- Because if we don't do it, Russia or China will take over Greenland, said Trump.

"I would like to make a deal, you know, the easy way, but if we don't do it the easy way, we're going to do it the hard way," Trump said in an implicit warning of possible military action to fulfil its objectives.

Danish Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen earlier this week said the US "has no right to annex any of the three nations in the Danish Kingdom." She warned that an American takeover would sound the death knell for the NATO military alliance.

The latest US threat has come even as envoys from Denmark and Greenland met with the White House officials on Thursday and tried to make an intransigent US President see reason. They are set to resume their efforts again next week. *—Agencies*

The White House is mulling sending Greenlanders

$10,000 to $1,00,000

per person to sell their land to the US, Reuters reported

Trump asks oil execs to invest $100B in Venezuela

PHOTO: X

WASHINGTON, 10 JAN

US President Donald Trump asked oil executives to rush back into Venezuela as the White House looks to quickly secure USD 100 billion in investments to tap into its expansive reserves of petroleum.

Trump assured several heads of the biggest oil companies on Friday that they would have "total safety" as Exxon said that Venezuela is "uninvestable".

"You're dealing with us directly and not dealing with Venezuela at all. We don't want you to deal with Venezuela," Trump said. "Our giant oil companies will be spending at least USD 100 billion of their money, not the government's money. They don't need government money. But they need government protection."

Since the US military captured former Venezuelan leader Nicolás Maduro last Saturday on charges of drug trafficking, Trump has been trying to take control of the natural wealth in the South American nation. Venezuela has some of the world's largest oil reserves.

The White House said it invited oil executives from 17 companies, including Chevron, which still operates in Venezuela, as well as ExxonMobil and ConocoPhillips, which both had oil projects in the country that were lost as part of a 2007 nationalisation of private businesses under Maduro's predecessor, Hugo Chávez.

- After meeting with top oil executives Trump told Fox News that a "lot of money" is going to made, and that he expects energy prices in the US to drop significantly .

"If we look at the commercial constructs and frameworks in place today in Venezuela, today it's un-investable," said Darren Woods, the ExxonMobil CEO. "And so significant changes have to be made to those commercial frameworks, the legal system, there has to be durable investment protections and there has to be change to the hydrocarbon laws in the country."

Other companies invited included Halliburton, Valero, Marathon, Shell, Singapore-based Trafigura, Italy-based Eni and Spain-based Repsol as well as a vast swath of domestic and international companies with interests ranging from construction to the commodity markets.

Under Maduro, Venezuela had been largely selling oil to Chinese and Russian firms.

After the meeting, Trump told Fox News that a "lot of money" is going to made, and that he expects energy prices in the US to significantly drop.

Earlier, the White House had said it would be "controlling" Venezuela's oil "indefinitely". *—Agencies*

Colombia Prez to meet Trump in Feb

Trump said on Friday that he'll meet Colombia President Gustavo Petro in early February. He urged faster action to curb cocaine flows into the US. Trump earlier called Petro a "sick man who likes making cocaine" and threatened to strike Colombia, but changed his tone after the friendly phone call.

Obama did nothing for Nobel prize: Trump

Trump said former president Barack Obama got the Nobel Peace Prize though he "didn't do anything". Trump reiterating he stopped eight wars said "no one in history is more deserving" of the prize. Trump said he would be honoured if Venezuela's María Corina Machado shares her Nobel with him.

Trump leaks job data graphs

Trump posted a graph on his Truth Social showing December job data, scheduled for release that was due only after the Labour Department's monthly jobs report on Friday morning. The data is kept secret as it release trigger market swings. Trump defended himself, saying "When people give me things, I post them."

Trump calls for 10% cuts on credit rate

Trump said on Friday he was calling for a 10 per cent cap on credit card interest rates effective for this year, he did not share any propose any action plan. He made the announcement on Truth Social, adding "Please be informed that we will no longer let the American Public be 'ripped off' by Credit Card Companies."

Tarique Rahman appointed BNP chairman

DHAKA, 10 JAN

Tarique Rahman, 60, son of former Bangladesh prime minister late Khaleda Zia, was appointed Chairman of Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP).

Speaking at a meet-and-greet event on Saturday, Rahman said there is "no reason" for the country to return to the political conditions that existed before the toppling of the Awami League regime on 5 August, 2024.

"We don't want to go back to pre 5 August days. There's no reason for us to do that," he said.

Rahman to Bangladesh on 25 December after 17 years of self-exile in London to tend to his mother who passed away recently and was the previous BNP head.

Rahman's comments came ahead of the 12 February general elections, where he has emerged as a front-runner for the Prime Minister post.

Meanwhile, Bangladesh's National Security Adviser Khalilur Rahman's met with US officials and discussed upcoming elections in Bangladesh, economic and trade relations, the Rohingya issue, and regional matters, a statement said.

The US reiterated its commitment to continuing its support to Bangladesh in its journey for democratic transition. *—Agencies*

N Korea accused South Korea of flying drones across the border between the nations this week *PHOTO: KCNA*

N Korea vows response to South's drone flights

SEOUL, 10 JAN

- North Korean forces used special electronic warfare assets on Sunday to bring down a drone flying over their border town. South Korea quickly denied the accusation.

North Korea's military accused South Korea of flying drones across the border between the nations this week. On Saturday North Korea said that South Korea will face consequences for its "unpardonable hysteria."

North Korean forces used special electronic warfare assets on Sunday to bring down a drone flying over North Korea's border town. The drone was equipped with two cameras that filmed unspecified areas, the General Staff of the North's Korean People's Army said in a statement.

South Korea quickly denied the accusation, saying that it neither operated drones at the time, nor did have the drone type North Korea was accusing it of breaching. South said it would investigate whether it was a civilian drone.

South Korea infiltrated another drone into North Korean airspace on 27 September before it was forced to crash, the North said, adding that authorities found the drone also contained video data on major objects in North Korea.

"We strongly denounce the hooligans' serial outrageous encroachment upon our sovereignty and undisguised provocative acts against us," the North Korean statement said. "The (South Korean) military warmongers will be surely forced to pay a dear price for their unpardonable hysteria." *—PTI*

Ukrainian drones set Russian oil depot afire after Moscow's attack

KYIV, 10 JAN

The strike comes after Russia attacked Ukraine with its deadly Oreshnik missile *PHOTO: UKRAINE EMERGENCY SERVICE*

A Ukrainian drone strike sparked a fire at an oil depot in Russia's southern Volgograd region, regional authorities said on Saturday. There were no immediate reports of casualties, the regional governor was quoted as saying in a Telegram post published on the channel of the local administration. The post did not specify the damage, but said that people living near the depot may have to be evacuated.

Ukraine's long-range drone strikes on Russian energy sites aim to deprive Moscow of the oil export revenue ithat is required to pursue its full-scale invasion.

Saturday's attack came the day after Russia bombarded Ukraine with hundreds of drones and dozens of missiles overnight into Friday triggering power outages, Ukrainian officials said. *—PTI*

Pakistan claims Iraq's interest in JF-17 Thunder aircraft

ISLAMABAD, 10 JAN

The Pakistan army announced that Iraq is interested in acquiring JF-17 Thunder fighter jets and Mushshak aircraft.

During an official visit to Iraq, Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmed Baber Sidhu discussed enhancing bilateral military cooperation with Lt Gen Pilot Mohanad Ghalib Mohammed Radi Al-Asadi. The discussions emphasised joint training and operational co-operation. Earlier, Pakistan engaged in talks with Bangladesh's air chief on JF-17 procurement. There us no confirmation from Bangladesh. *—PTI*

GOOD WAS SMILING BEFORE DEATH

New ICE shooting video raises questions about officer training

MINNEAPOLIS, 10 JAN

A new 47-second video has been published online by Minnesota-based conservative news site Alpha News and later shared on social media by the Department of Homeland Security.

The video shows the fatal shooting from the perspective of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agent Jonathan Ross, who fired the shots that killed 37-year-old civilian Renee Good.

Video footage shows a police encounter escalating into gunfire as officers confront Good, seated in an SUV, while her wife films and argues with police. As officers order Good out of the vehicle, she briefly reverses and then drives forward.

Ross, holding a gun in one hand and a cellphone in the other, opens fire as the SUV speeds away, later crashing into parked vehicles.

The video shows Good smiling and saying "I'm not mad at you" before the being shot.

The accused ICE officer's cam shows Good seconds before she was shot dead, saying: 'I'm not mad at you' *PHOTO:ALPHA NEWS*

However, Vice President JD Vance and Homeland Security spokesperson Tricia McLaughlin said on X that the new video supports their claim that the officer acted in self-defence. Minneapolis Mayor Jacob Frey said any such argument is "garbage."

Policing experts said the footage did not change their views on the use of force but raised additional questions about the officer's training.

Hennepin County Attorney Mary Moriarty, who has worked with the FBI before, said her office will post a link for the public to submit footage of the shooting.

Good's death — at least the fifth linked to immigration sweeps since President Donald Trump took office — has resonated far beyond Minneapolis. More protests are planned this weekend.

Meanwhile, Good's wife, Becca Good, said in a statement that "We had whistles. They had guns". *—PTI*

Bernstein revises India's equity outlook to 'Neutral'

2026 brings no new tailwinds to Indian equity markets

NEW DELHI, 10 JAN

Global brokerage firm Bernstein has revised its outlook on Indian equities to 'Neutral' from 'Selective Buy', citing stretched valuations, limited policy headroom, and a lack of fresh macro catalysts to drive outsized returns in 2026.

According to Bernstein, 2026 brings no new tailwinds to Indian equity markets. By definition, a Neutral rating means that returns on investments (ROI) are likely in line with broader market returns.

The downgrade comes after several years of strong market performance fuelled by government-led capital expenditure, robust domestic inflows and optimism around the China+1 manufacturing narrative.

In its India Strategy Outlook published recently, Bernstein said the Indian equity story is not turning negative but is instead entering a quieter phase.

Indian equity is entering a quieter phase, Bernstein says **PHOTO: ANI**

"Enter 2026, and the ink is beginning to run thin. In our view, this is not a crisis moment, but rather burdened by its own past. It's the year that promises many things: few rate cuts, a slight return of private capex, and a tentative trade deal - but we believe these "little bits of everything" do not carry enough momentum to keep the India story at heights we've been used to seeing," the Bernstein report read.

"So we're cutting India from our selective buy view last year to a neutral view, not because the franchise has lost appeal, but because policy levers are largely exhausted and macro as reflected by real GDP growth is closer to a peak."

Bernstein highlighted that the government's aggressive post-pandemic capex cycle is nearing its limits.

While another 50-75 basis points of rate cuts may be possible, analysts believe these would be insufficient to reignite strong momentum, especially as private sector capital expenditure remains subdued due to moderate capacity utilisation levels.

Valuations were a central concern behind the downgrade by Bernstein.

India remains among the most expensive equity markets globally, trading above 20 times forward P/E ratio, compared with an average of about 15 times across major economies which have been tracked by Bernstein. *—ANI*

INDIA-US TRADE TALKS

Trade deals driven by policy, says GTRI post Lutnick's claim

NEW DELHI, 10 JAN

Major trade agreements hinge largely on policy convergence between the parties and the stakeholders involved, and not leader-level symbolism, asserted India-based think tank Global Trade Research Initiative (GTRI), after US Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick's claims that the Bilateral Trade Agreement (BTA) did not fructify because Prime Minister Narendra Modi did not personally call President Donald Trump.

Earlier, the US Commerce Secretary had claimed that the trade deal between India and the United States did not happen as Prime Minister Narendra Modi did not place a call to Donald Trump. In a conversation with American venture capitalist Chamath Palihapitiya, as part of the 'All-In Podcast' on Thursday (local time), Lutnick said that while contracts were negotiated and the entire deal structure was prepared, the final step required direct, leader-level engagement.

As India-US trade talks continue to face delays, a remark by the US Commerce Secretary has shifted the focus from substance to symbolism, according to GTRI.

The explanation by Lutnick raises more questions than it answers about how complex trade negotiations actually break down, GTRI said.

Lutnick had said PM Modi later agreed to place the call, but by then it was "too late", as the US had already shifted focus to concluding trade deals with other countries.

The US trade agreements with Indonesia, Philippines and Vietnam concluded in July 2025. India-US negotiations continued. *—ANI*

Markets raised Rs 1.7L cr in FY25-26: Sebi Chairman

CHENNAI, 10 JAN

- During the first nine months companies raised Rs 1.7 lakh crore through 311 initial public offerings, while overall equity mobilisation has crossed Rs 3.8 lakh crore.

SEBI chairman Tuhin Kanta Pandey on Saturday said India's capital markets have expanded rapidly over the past decade, recording strong growth across equities, derivatives, mutual funds, REITs, InvITs and corporate bonds.

Highlighting performance in the current financial year, Pandey said the number of unique investors has risen sharply from 4.3 crore in FY20 to 13.7 crore at present. During the first nine months of the year, companies raised Rs 1.7 lakh crore through 311 initial public offerings, while overall equity mobilisation has already crossed Rs 3.8 lakh crore.

Addressing the 15th International Capital Market Convention of the Association of National Exchanges Members of India (ANMI) in Chennai, he said SEBI was developing a "smarter regulatory architecture" focused on streamlining compliance, removing duplication and safeguarding investor protection and market integrity. He noted that the SEBI Stock Brokers Regulations, 2026, have been notified, allowing stockbrokers to diversify into activities regulated by other financial sector authorities, subject to safeguards.

Pandey also referred to a revised framework for dealing with technical glitches in stockbrokers' electronic trading systems, announced on Friday. The new rules apply only to brokers with more than 10,000 registered clients, easing the compliance burden on smaller firms. SEBI said around 60 per cent of stockbrokers would fall outside the revised framework, significantly reducing their regulatory requirements.

The updated framework extends the reporting timeline for technical glitches from one hour to two hours, accounts for trading holidays and simplifies reporting by shifting to a single common reporting platform. Main board IPOs raised Rs 1.72 lakh crore in 2025. *—ANI*

Goyal holds EU FTA talks in Brussels

NEW DELHI, 10 JAN

Union Minister of Commerce and Industry, Piyush Goyal, has concluded his two-day visit to Brussels, marking a significant progress in the India-EU Free Trade Agreement (FTA) negotiations. Goyal was in Brussels on 8 and 9 January, engaging in high-level discussions with the European Commissioner for Trade and Economic Security, Maros Sefcovic. Both leaders guided their respective negotiating teams to resolve outstanding issues and accelerate the agreement.

Union Minister of Commerce and Industry Piyush Goyal during high-level talks with EU Trade and Economic Security Commissioner Maros Sefcovic in Brussels **PHOTO: PTI**

The dialogue concentrated on the proposed India-EU FTA, emphasising the necessity of safeguarding the interests of farmers and micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs), while facilitating a deeper integration of Indian industries into global supply chains. Goyal stated, "During this dialogue, we deliberated across key areas of the proposed agreement... we reaffirmed our commitment to a rules-based trading framework."

The discussions noted the steady progress made across various negotiation tracks, including Market Access for Goods and Services. Both sides expressed a strong political resolve to address remaining issues collaboratively, aiming for a fair and balanced agreement aligned with shared values.

In Liechtenstein, Goyal held a business meet to enhance economic ties under the India-EFTA Trade and Economic Partnership Agreement, highlighting the need of investment and technology collaboration. *—PTI*

India office leasing hits a record in 2025: Report

NEW DELHI, 10 JAN

India's office real estate market delivered a record-breaking performance in 2025, with gross leasing rising 20 per cent year on year to an all-time high of 86.4 million sq ft, according to Knight Frank India. Leasing volumes were 43 per cent higher than pre-pandemic levels, underlining strong occupier confidence. Bengaluru led the market with a historic 28 million sq ft, while Hyderabad, NCR, Pune and Chennai each crossed 10 million sq ft. Global Capability Centers emerged as the key demand driver, accounting for 38 per cent of total absorption, with Bengaluru capturing nearly half of GCC leasing. New supply grew more slowly at 54.8 million sq ft, creating a supply-demand gap that pushed rents higher across major cities. *—ANI*

Warburg Pincus to acquire 41% stakes in Fleur

NEW DELHI, 10 JAN

Lemon Tree Hotels said its board has approved Warburg Pincus' acquisition of a 41.09 per cent stake in its subsidiary Fleur Hotels, along with a primary investment of up to Rs 960 crore in tranches. The acquisition will be executed by Coastal Cedar Investment BV, an affiliate of Warburg Pincus. The boards of Lemon Tree and Fleur have cleared a composite scheme of arrangement to reorganise the group and unlock long-term shareholder value. Under the plan, Lemon Tree will become a pure-play, asset-light hotel management and br and platform, while Fleur will operate as the hotel ownership and development arm. Fleur will be listed separately on the NSE and BSE, subject to regulatory and shareholder approvals, with the process taking 12–15 months. *—PTI*

PHOTO: PTI

Techno Paints appoints Sachin as brand ambassador

HYDERABAD, 10 JAN

Techno Paints and Chemicals is planning to raise Rs 500 crore through an IPO in the next financial year, company sources said on Saturday. Sachin Tendulkar has been appointed as the brand ambassador of the paint manufacturer for three years, a move expected to help the company expand. The brand aims to strengthen its national presence through Tendulkar. "We are honoured to collaborate with one of the world's most iconic cricketers and a Bharat Ratna, Sachin Tendulkar. We are looking forward to achieving bigger and greater things this year with expansion and the IPO," said Akuri Srinivas Reddy, chairman of Techno Paints and Chemicals. *—PTI*

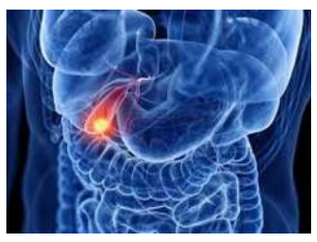
D-Mart's Q3 profit jumps 18% to Rs 855.8 cr

NEW DELHI, 10 JAN

Avenue Supermarts Ltd, which owns and operates the retail chain D-Mart, on Saturday, reported an increase of 18.27 per cent in its consolidated net profit at Rs 855.78 crore in the December quarter of FY26. The company had registered a net profit of Rs 723.54 crore in the October-December quarter a year ago, according to a regulatory filing from Avenue Supermarts. Its revenue from operations was up 13.32 per cent to Rs 18,100.88 crore during the quarter under review. It was at Rs 15,972.55 crore in the corresponding quarter last fiscal. Total expenses of Avenue Supermarts in the December quarter were up 13 per cent to Rs 16,942.62 crore. Avenue Supermarts' total income, was at Rs 18,117.81 crore, up by 13.25 per cent in the December quarter of the current fiscal year. *—PTI*

Researchers find markers for early cancer diagnosis

TEZPUR, 10 JAN



Researchers at Tezpur University in Assam have discovered distinct chemical signatures in blood that can distinguish gallbladder cancer cases occurring with and without gallstones, offering potential for earlier diagnosis of this aggressive and often undetected cancer.

The study, led by Assistant Professor Pankaj Barah and research scholar Cinmoyee Baruah, identified specific blood-based metabolic markers that could serve as biomarkers. Blood samples were analysed from three groups: patients with gallbladder cancer without gallstones, patients with cancer and gallstones, and individuals with gallstones only. Advanced metabolomics techniques revealed hundreds of altered metabolites 180 in gallstone-free cases and 225 in gallstone-associated cases. Distinct biomarker panels were identified for each variant, many involving bile acids and amino acid derivatives linked to tumor progression.

The research was conducted through interdisciplinary collaboration involving surgeons, pathologists, pharmaceutical scientists, molecular biologists, and computational experts, with clinical input from Assam Medical College, Dr B Borooah Cancer Institute, and Swagat Super-Speciality Hospital. Experts say that these findings could lead to non-invasive blood tests for early detection, particularly in high-risk areas, though multi-center studies are needed before clinical use. *—PTI*

AI, rate cuts to drive global markets in 2026: Report

NEW DELHI, 10 JAN

PHOTO: AI

Global financial markets are heading into 2026 with a cautiously optimistic outlook, supported by easing inflation, selective monetary policy support and a powerful investment cycle driven by artificial intelligence (AI), according to the summary of Global Strategy Year Ahead 2026 Reports released by Abakkus.

The report noted that the global economy is transitioning toward a more balanced growth phase. While inflation has moderated across regions, central banks remain cautious.

Policymakers are expected to shift toward gradual support rather than aggressive easing, with the U.S. Federal Reserve projected to cut rates modestly, the European Central Bank largely on hold, and Japan continuing its slow normalization.

Global GDP growth in 2026 is projected to be around 2.7 per cent to 3.4 per cent, led by the United States.

US growth is expected to remain around 2-2.4 per cent, while China is forecast to grow near 4.5 per cent despite structural challenges. Europe is expected to grow by 1-1.5 per cent.

Emerging markets stand out as key beneficiaries of supply-chain diversification, favorable demographics and accelerating digital adoption. *—PTI*

Action initiated against 27 restaurants for service overcharge

NEW DELHI, 10 JAN

The Central Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA) on Saturday said it has taken suo motu action against 27 restaurants for mandatory levying of service charges in violation of the law.

These restaurants have been fined up to Rs 50,000, and were asked to refund the service charge amount to customers and also modify their billing system, as the mandatory levy of service charge has been declared as an unfair trade practice.

The CCPA took action based on consumer complaints on the National Consumer Helpline, a government helpline number, supported by invoices. Probe revealed that several restaurants, including Café Blue Bottle, Patna, and China Gate Restaurant Pvt Ltd (Bora Bora), Mumbai, were automatically levying a 10 per cent service charge by default. *—PTI*

FOR VISA & MASTERCARD

PhonePe's 'Bolt' allows one-click card payments

BENGALURU, 10 JAN

PhonePe Payment Gateway (PhonePe PG), on Saturday announced the launch of 'PhonePe PG Bolt' for Visa and Mastercard Credit and Debit card transactions. The solution utilises device tokenisation to provide a secure and efficient in-app checkout experience for PhonePe platform users and merchant partners.

According to the company, this feature allows users to tokenise their Mastercard and Visa cards once on the PhonePe app, enabling them to use their saved cards across any merchant integrated with PhonePe PG instead of having to tokenise their card separately with every merchant. By replacing sensitive card details with secure tokens, the system removes the requirement for CVV entry during subsequent transactions carried out on the same device. This architecture reduces the number of steps in the payment journey, maintaining the user within the merchant's app environment throughout the process and eliminating traditional redirects to external pages.

The new feature will allow people to used their Mastercards and Visa cards across merchants integrated with the PhonePe app **PHOTO: ANI**

Speaking about the launch, Yuvraj Singh Shekhawat, Chief Business Officer of Merchant Business at PhonePe Limited said, "The launch of PhonePe PG Bolt feature for Visa and Mastercard is a significant step in our journey to simplify digital payments for millions of Indians. By leveraging device tokenization, we will enable users and merchants to move away from the traditional, cumbersome checkout process to a secure, one-click payment experience. This not only enhances user convenience but also empowers our merchant partners to maximize their growth through industry-best success rates and reduced drop-offs."

Additionally, the solution provides merchants with a customizable interface that integrates directly into their existing app flow, maintaining brand consistency. *—ANI*

'Long-term planning drives India's energy readiness'

NEW DELHI, 10 JAN

Union Petroleum and Natural Gas Minister Hardeep Singh Puri has said that India's long-term energy planning is delivering tangible benefits, emphasising that the true measure of policy lies in its impact on everyday life rather than announcements alone.

In a post on X, Puri noted that India's energy system is tested daily in homes, on roads and in workplaces, where forecasts meet real-world conditions. He highlighted the expansion of piped natural gas (PNG), pointing out that around 1.58 crore households now receive PNG, eliminating the need to book LPG refills and promoting cleaner, more convenient cooking fuel.

The minister also underlined the growth of compressed natural gas (CNG) infrastructure as a key indicator of planning that meets rising demand. Currently, 8,428 CNG stations are operational nationwide, with the target set to more than double to 18,336 by 2030, enhancing access to cleaner transportation fuel.

Puri further said the expansion of the national gas pipeline network, which has increased from roughly 15,000km in 2014 to 25,429km today and is expected to reach 33,475km by 2030, will strengthen energy connectivity in the country. *—ANI*

X/@LINDSEYVONN

Lindsey Vonn impresses again, leading World Cup

AUSTRIA, 10 JAN

Lindsey Vonn showed again on Saturday that she is the standout downhill racer in this Olympic season. Vonn won her second World Cup downhill in four races this season, raising expectations in this remarkable comeback racing at age 41 with her right knee rebuilt using titanium implants. The United States star was 0.37 seconds faster than Kajsa Vickhoff Lie in tricky, overcast conditions. Vonn was jumping up, cheering in the leader's box when her teammate Jacqueline Wiles raced into third place, 0.48 back. On a shortened course that took her fewer than 67 seconds to complete, Vonn still clocked 130 kph (81 mph) for one of the fastest speeds any women's racer will hit this season.—*PTI*

KIBG 2026: Karnataka swim to overall crown

DIU, 10 JAN

Swimming powerhouse Karnataka ended on top of the medal standings at the Khelo India Beach Games as Ashmita Chandra and Dhrupad Ramakrishna clinched the women's and men's 5km Open Water event gold medals respectively at Ghoghla Beach here on Saturday.Karnataka topped the standings with three gold, all from Open Water swimming, two silver, and six bronze to win the overall crown in the second edition of the event.Tamil Nadu finished second with three gold, two silver, and three bronze, while last edition's winners, Manipur, finished third with three gold, two silver, and two bronze. Madhya Pradesh finished fourth with a tally of three gold, one silver, and one bronze, thanks to their exploits in pencak silat.With two gold, two silver, and four bronze medals.—*PTI*

PHOTO: X/@PCB

Zaman comes under scrutiny over his bowling action in BBL

KARACHI, 10 JAN

Pakistan's young fast bowler Zaman Khan came under scrutiny over his slingshot bowling action during a Big Bash League match on Saturday. Australia's great David Warner, who scored 82 for Sydney Thunder, was seen repeatedly questioning Zaman's action and raising the issue with the on-field umpire after facing the pacer. Zaman, who has joined the Brisbane Heat as a replacement for injured Pakistan captain Shaheen Shah Afridi, endured a difficult outing in his first match of the season, conceding 32 runs in three overs.—*PTI*

FIFA World Cup trophy lands in Delhi

NEW DELHI, 10 JAN

Ahead of the FIFA World Cup 2026, with the tournament set to kick off on June 11, the original trophy arrived in India on Saturday as part of its world tour. The original trophy was unveiled here at a ceremony in the presence of former Brazilian World Cup-winning player and FIFA legend Gilberto D'Silva, and Union Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports Mansukh Mandaviya. D'Silva said the trophy will inspire youngsters in India to play more football, just like they play cricket. ...this trophy ...is to inspire so many young kids, inspire the next generation of players, women and boys to become successful also here in football, as they have done in other sports, especially in cricket.—*PTI*

Kohli, Rohit in focus as India eye winning start against NZ

Iyer, Pant, and Siraj were not part of ODI series

VADODARA, 10 JAN

Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma's prime form is expected to drive India's progress in ODIs as the full-strength hosts take on a new-look New Zealand in the first match of the three-match series here on Sunday.

Even as focus remains on the T20 World Cup, which is less than a month away, Kohli and Rohit will hog the limelight in the three ODIs over the next seven days.

There has been no dearth of game-time for the two superstars who played a couple of matches each in the Vijay Hazare Trophy's league round, piling up big runs to underline that they are not going away anytime soon.

Gill's return, however, is likely to take Yashasvi Jaiswal out of the top order where he scored his maiden ODI ton in the last match against South Africa.

The return of Shreyas Iyer should end a largely unsuccessful run of experiments in the batting order, with the 31-year-old set to claim his No 4 spot back.

KL Rahul's continued role as a lower-order batter and wicketkeeper is set to keep Rishabh Pant out of the XI, with the latter remaining second choice in the 50-overs format.

While Iyer, Pant and Mohammed Siraj were not part of the preparations for the ODI series here in Kotambi until Saturday, Ravindra Jadeja trained at full tilt on Friday, signalling his availability.

India's Rohit Sharma, Virat Kohli, and other players during a practice session on Saturday *PHOTO:PTI*

Former India skipper Rohit Sharma on Saturday offered batting tips to **Mohammed Siraj**, while Rishabh Pant briefly needed treatment after being hit during net practice as India put the final touches to their preparations. —*PTI*

INDIA VS NEW ZEALAND ODI

INDIA vs NEW ZEALAND
Match starts in Vadodara
@1.30 pm IST

HEAD TO HEAD

PLAYED:	120
INDIA WON:	62
SA WON:	50
DRAW	1
NO RESULT	7

Shubman Gill opens up about T20 WC exclusion

Left out of the T20 World Cup squad, India's ODI and Test captain Shubman Gill on Saturday said he respects the selectors' decision and remains focused on giving his best whenever the opportunity arises. The 26-year-old was not considered for next month's T20 World Cup despite leading India in the longer formats. He has played 36 T20Is for India, scoring 869 runs at an average of 28.03 with a strike rate of 138.59. "I am where I have to be, and whatever is written in my destiny no one can take that from me," Gill told reporters ahead of the first ODI against New Zealand here on Sunday."A player always believes he will try his best for the country, and the selectors have taken their decision. I always try to be in the moment, and it makes life simpler." India will play three ODIs followed by three T20Is ahead of the T20 World Cup, which starts on 7 February. "The last time we played ODIs against New Zealand, I made my debut, and I always cherish that," he said.

WOMEN'S PREMIER LEAGUE

Phoebe Litchfield's fighting half-century went in vain *PHOTO:PTI*

Gujarat Giants beat Warriorz by 10 runs

NAVI MUMBAI, 10 JAN

Australian batter Phoebe Litchfield's commanding knock of 78 off just 40 balls went in vain as Gujarat Giants beat UP Warriorz by 10 runs in a high-scoring Women's Premier League match here on Saturday.

Sent in to bat, captain Ashleigh Gardner struck a scintillating 65 before Georgia Wareham played a late cameo of 27 not out off just 10 balls as Gujarat Giants posted an impressive 207 for 4.

That total proved to be enough despite a stunning counter-attacking innings from Litchfield, who kept the Warriorz in the hunt. But her departure in the 16th over virtually ended Warriorz's valiant resistance.

She hit eight fours and five sixes during her knock.At the end, Warriorz ended at 197 for 8, falling short by 10 runs. Asha Sobhana made a late charge with an unbeaten 27 off just 10 balls with the help of three fours and two sixes, but that turned out to be too late in the day.

For Gujarat Giants, Australian Georgia Wareham grabbed two wickets for 30 runs with her leg-spin, to add to her stunning cameo with the bat earlier in the day. Renuka Singh and Sophie Devine also got two wickets each, while Gardner and Rajeshwari Gayakwad took one apiece.

Warriorz began their chase of 208 on a shaky note with opener Kiran Navgire getting out in the fifth ball from Renuka. But captain and the other opener Meg Lanning (30 off 27 balls) and one-down Phoebe Litchfield steadied the innings with a 70-run stand for the second wicket.

Thereafter, the Warriorz suffered a mini collapse with three batters, Lanning, Harleen Deol (0), and Deepti Sharma (1) getting out for the addition of just one run in the space of five balls. The Warriorz slumped to 74 for 4 in the 10th over from 73 for 1 in the ninth over.

Gujarat Giants 207 for 4 (Gardner 65, Anushka 44, Ecclestone 2-32) beat UP Warriorz 197 for 8 (Litchfield 78, Renuka 2-25, Wareham 2-30) by 10 runs. —*PTI*

MALAYSIA OPEN

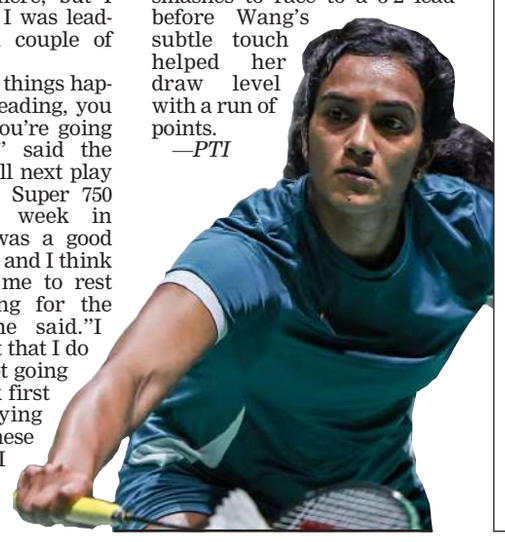
Sindhu loses to Wang in SFs

KUALA LUMPUR, 10 JAN

Ace Indian shuttler P V Sindhu's impressive run came to an end after a straight-game defeat to China's Wang Zhiyi in the women's singles semifinals of the season-opening Malaysia Open Super 1000 here on Saturday.

The two-time Olympic medallist could not sustain the pressure against the world number two, committing too many unforced errors in a 16-21, 15-21 loss, which brought down the curtains on India's campaign in the tournament.Playing her first tournament after recovering from a foot injury that kept her on the sidelines since October last year, Sindhu also let slip an 11-6 lead in the second game."I think 11-6, I took a break, maybe I should have taken 2-3 points there, but I think even though I was leading, there were a couple of small errors.

In a match, these things happen where you're leading, you can't expect that you're going to win it easily," said the 30-year-old, who will next play at the India Open Super 750 tournament next week in Delhi."I think it was a good tournament for me, and I think it's important for me to rest now and get going for the Indian Open," she said."I think it's important that I do my best, and it's not going to be easy. I think first round I'll be playing against the Vietnamese girl, so yeah, I hope I do well..She produced her trademark cross-court smashes to race to a 5-2 lead before Wang's subtle touch helped her draw level with a run of points. —*PTI*



Jadumani, Nikhat, and Lovlina win gold at National Boxing C'ships

NOIDA, 10 JAN

World Championships bronze medallist Mohammed Hussamuddin marked an emphatic return from a prolonged injury layoff with a gold medal in the 60kg category, while established stars Nikhat Zareen and Lovlina Borgohain also claimed titles at the National Boxing Championships here on Saturday.

Jadumani got the better of senior pro and sparring partner Pawan Bartwal 5-0 with a flurry of punches and upper cuts to add to his list of big-ticket scalps in what is fast shaping up to be the most competitive category in Indian boxing.

He had outplayed twice-Olympian and World Championship medalist Amit Panghal in the semifinals.

With both finalists belonging to the Services Sports Control Board (SSCB), Pawan and Jadumani had no secrets from each other, matching in both power and endurance, but the youngster from Manipur clearly had planned for it, preferring quality over quantity and landing fewer but more scoring punches. Nikhat Zareen came out tops in a messy, physical bout with Nitu Ghanghas in the 51kg, while Minakshi Hooda retained her 48kg title against Manju. —*PTI*

FA CUP: DEFENDING CHAMPION CRYSTAL PALACE KNOCKED OUT

LONDON, 10 JAN

Non-league Macclesfield Town produced one of the FA Cup's most startling upsets on Saturday when it beat holder Crystal Palace 2–1 in a third-round thriller, knocking Oliver Glasner's team out of the competition and sending the Moss Rose crowd into raptures.

Captain Paul Dawson and Isaac Buckley-Ricketts struck in each half as the home side-coached by Wayne Rooney's younger brother Johnstunned Premier League side Palace, a team 117 places above it in England's football pyramid.

Dawson rose to head home a lovely curled free kick from Luke Duffy in the 43rd minute. Buckley-Ricketts doubled their lead in the 60th minute when he twisted his body to wrong-foot Palace goalkeeper Walter Benitez in front of a delirious crowd at Moss Rose, the site of a children's under-nines practice earlier in the day.

Palace's Yeremy Pino scored with a stunning free-kick in the 90th minute to make for some nervy added-time minutes. —*PTI*

WTT Feeder Series: Divyanshi, Anusha reach quarters

VADODARA, 10 JAN

Youngster Divyanshi Bhowmick and the experienced Anusha Kutumbale recorded stunning wins to reach the women's singles quarterfinals of the WTT Feeder Series here on Saturday.

In the women's singles pre-quarterfinals, Divyanshi came back from a game down to beat second seed Park Gahyeon of the Republic 8-11, 11-9, 11-9, 13-11, while Anusha defeated sixth seed Lee Zion 11-6, 11-6, 11-9 to reach the quarterfinals. Divyanshi will now face Syndrela Das, the U-17 girls singles champion in just concluded WTT Youth Contender. The eighth seed Syndrela defeated qualifier Yashini Sivasankar 11-9, 11-4, 12-10 in the other Round of 16 clash.Anusha will be up against fourth seed Yashaswini Ghorpade, who blanked Sayali Wani 11-3, 11-9, 11-5.

However, junior national champion Hansini Mathan's run in the tournament came to an end after she went down against another Korean player, Ryu Hanna. —*PTI*

COCO GAUFF BEATS IGA SWIATEK

SYDNEY, 10 JAN

Coco Gauff beat No. 2-ranked Iga Swiatek 6-4, 6-2 to force a mixed-doubles match to decide the United Cup semifinal between the United States and Poland on Saturday.

Fourth-ranked Gauff, the French Open champion, evened the matchup at 1-1 at the team event after Hurkacz beat Taylor, Fritz 7-6 (1), 7-6 (2) in the singles opener at Ken Rosewall Arena. It was Gauff's fourth straight victory over Swiatek, the Wimbledon champion. Gauff and teammate Harrison will face Swiatek and Hurkacz in mixed doubles. —*PTI*

Switzerland beats Belgium to reach first United Cup final

SYDNEY, 10 JAN

Belinda Bencic won her eighth match of the week and combined with Jakub Paul in the deciding mixed doubles to defeat Belgium's Elise Mertens and Zizou Bergs 6-3, 0-6, 10-5 Saturday to qualify Switzerland for the United Cup final.

Bencic has won all four of her singles matches and four in mixed doubles this week in the team event. Paul, who won just six tour-level doubles matches last year, hit several down-the-line winners at crucial moments to lead Switzerland into Sunday's final against either the defending champion United States or Poland, who played their semifinal later Saturday.

"He's so brave it's unbelievable," Bencic said of Paul. "I tell him to go (for it), and he actually goes. It's crazy."

Earlier, Bencic extended her undefeated season-opening singles streak when she beat Mertens 6-3, 4-6, 7-6 (0) to put Switzerland ahead 1-0. But Stan, who will retire at the end of this season, was beaten 6-3, 6-7 (4), 6-3 by Bergs to send the match to a mixed doubles decider at Ken Arena. —*PTI*

AFTER ONE SEASON

Neeraj splits with Czech coach Jan Zelezny

NEW DELHI, 10 JAN

Two-time Olympic medal-winning javelin throw star Neeraj Chopra on Saturday announced an end to his partnership with Czech coach Jan Zelezny after just one season, which the Indian said was marked by "progress, respect, and a shared love for the sport."

Chopra did not specify the reason for ending the stint with Zelezny, a bona fide legend of the sport who holds the world record and under whose tutelage the Haryanalad breached the 90m mark last year.

Reflecting on their work, Chopra said to learn directly from an athlete he had admired since childhood was a dream come true and gave him a completely new "toolbox of exercises, technical ideas, and fresh perspectives.

Neeraj Chopra and Jan Zelezny *PHOTO: PTI*

"Working with Jan opened my eyes to so many new ideas. The way he thinks about technique, rhythm, and movement is incredible, and I learned a lot from every single session we had together," Chopra said.

"What I'm most proud of is the friendship I've built with someone who has been my idol all my life. Jan is not only the best javelin thrower of all time, but also one of the best human beings I have ever met," he added.

The 59-year-old Zelezny also reflected warmly on the partnership and the progress they made together.

"Working with an athlete like Neeraj was a great experience. I'm glad we met and were able to work together, and that I got him to break the 90-metre barrier for the first time. —*PTI*

ALCARAZ BEATS JANNIK SINNER

MILAN, 30 OCT

Carlos Alcaraz beat great rival Jannik Sinner in a light-hearted sell-out exhibition match in South Korea on Saturday ahead of the Australian Open.

Taking place eight days before the Melbourne Grand Slam and in their first appearances this year, the Spanish world number one won 7-5, 7-6(6) in front of an enthusiastic 12,000 crowd in Incheon. Neither will play competitively until the Australian Open, where Italy's world number two Sinner is the defending two-time champion. —*PTI*